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JULY
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**Dr. Morgentaler,
the Order of Canada,
and the abortion
debate we're
afraid to have**

BY ANDREW COYNE P.16

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their stock price will continue to rise. It's a sad day when the lure of money is more important than compassion.

Les Hewitt, Calgary

GAS ATTACK

ON "THE PUZZLE OF Frozen Gas" (Business, June 18), research scientist Ray D'Amore says it is unlikely that a runaway greenhouse effect could result from the evolution of methane created by releasing the gas hydrates that coat as the ocean floor. He's missing the obvious: Gas hydrates exist only up to the pressure/temperature boundary that allows their formation. Heat the water a little and those borderline hydrates will begin to liberate their methane. More methane in the atmosphere will lead to more warming and hence more hydrates liberated. Of added concern, when a gas such as methane bubbles through sea water, it scrubs out other gases such as oxygen. No price for guessing what this will cause.

The ten-tonned Arctic Ocean collects over 50 per cent of the radiant energy from the sun. When the Arctic Ocean is ice-free, it will absorb that energy and then it could well warm up areas outside the Arctic that will also begin to release methane. The melting of the Arctic ice is about 30 years ahead of the predictions of the most pessimistic models. What is interesting from the point of view of a disinterested observer is that these changes are likely to occur very sharply over, at most, a few years.

William Mager Gamon, Whapora, New Zealand

CULINARY CONTRETEMPS

I DO NOT AGREE that it's right for a national magazine to single out and isolate one person in Canada and I do not find Jacob Richter's article about dining out in Quebec City ("Where you'll want to eat in Quebec," *Times*, June 30) to be all fair to *Les Amis Canadiens*. My husband and I attended the Winter Carnival last February and, after watching the dog sled races, went to *Les Amis Canadiens* for lunch. The atmosphere, staff, and service—not to mention the food—were excellent. We ate at other restaurants in Quebec City and thoroughly enjoyed our visit, the carnival, the people and the beautiful city of Quebec.

Lenore Haguen, Concord, Ont.

FLUORESCENT SPARK

YOUR STORY ABOUT compact fluorescent light bulbs ("Light Wars," *Science*, June 18) covered some common misconceptions. The federal and Ontario governments are phasing out inefficient lighting. There is also ban on incandescent bulbs if new min-

imum energy performance standards can be achieved; incandescent lighting will remain available.

And although incandescent bulbs generate waste heat, they are an expensive technology for reducing home heating bills compared to increasing insulation and air sealing. This heat also causes higher air conditioning costs. Regarding the mercury content in CFL bulbs, a single faulty fluorescent tube can be crushed, and after some time, the mercury can be released. Although CFLs do require separate waste disposal, and produce the same heat, they are not a dangerous product. Some retailers are now collecting old CFLs for recycling and reuse will follow.

CFL technology has improved dramatically over the last decade. Leading manufacturers are reducing costs and improving

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4 THE NO NET by Stephanie Meyer	4,000
5 THE SPIES OF WARSAW by Allan Funt	00
6 THE UNCHARTERED OF THE BEYOND by Salman Rushdie	2,000
7 CHANGING HARRY WINTON by Lauren Whelan	00
8 UNCOMMON SENSE by Allen Bennett	4,000
9 DEVIL MAY CARE by Deborah Fink	4,000
10 THE STORY OF EGGAR SAWYER by David Whitehead	7,000
Non-fiction	
1 THE WHITE HOUSE by David Lasker	1,046
2 THE LAST LUNCH by David Lasker	2,000
3 ADDITION by Barbara Walters	1,000
4 THE LAST LUNCH by David Lasker	10,000
5 THE BILLIONAIRE'S VINEGAR by Benjamin H. Mott	10
6 THE MAN WHO LOVED CHINA by Simon Winchester	1,000
7 A ROMANCE ON THREE LEGS by Katie Miller	1,000
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LAST WEEK/ENDING ON LISTS

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'Two pages on Angelina? Could we maybe have more coverage of Canadian Olympic athletes?'

quality. CFL remains recommended as an energy-efficient alternative to traditional incandescent light bulbs.
Peter Law, Ontario's Chief Energy Conservation Officer, Toronto



DESPITE the media's obsession with Obama, McCain is not out of the race yet, says a reader

ISOLATING A THUG?

FOR **RAY ZIMMERMAN'S** President Robert Magabe is a "rogue and a thug." ("The real Magabe," *Seven Days*, June 30) You suggest he be isolated. What will that do? Drive up commodity prices? Incite violence? Instigate conflict for less? While it is difficult to live in Zimbabwe? This has been Zimbabwe for years, and no amount of political or economic pressure will rid the country of this brutal dictator who craves for power for his own sake, and will hold onto it no matter how his people suffer. You are not a violent person, but I suggest that the sons of Zimbabwe will not be isolated until Magabe is dead and Zimbabwe's people are allowed to choose their own path in freedom.
Rob Weiss, Portsmouth, Ont.

IN PRAISE OF MCCAIN

WITH THE OVERWHELMING media hype surrounding the Barack Obama campaign,

and his youthful visage, it is nice to see the occasional story regarding his seemingly forgotten opponent, John McCain, who has not quite yet lost the election ("Not just McCain," *World*, June 30). The media's

doesn't lie. Dressed in an ivory shirt, with blonde and caramel streaks, John looked fabulous." *Current interest?*) He also said, "her intelligence seems as a shock." And then you devote two pages to Angelina? Could we maybe have more coverage of Canadian Olympic athletes?
Lynn Molloy, Saint Barbara, Calif.

A FATHERLESS CHILD

DEMS SPEECH on Father's Day as a Chicago church, Barack Obama says, "Any fool can have a child. That doesn't make you a father." ("Amen," *Seven Days*, June 30). I was a 100 per cent Clinton fan, but reading that Obama's father left him when he was two years old moved me. Fathers do willingly walk away or die prematurely; either way it hurts beyond measurement. I was a city bus driver and am now an occasional high school teacher and both positions have given me the opportunity to deal with children of absentee fathers. I can tell you that all children need a father, to me creating a fatherless child is the greatest of sins.
Primer Bedford, Windsor, Ont.

CONCESSION in its story on railway safety ("How CN's public image went off the rails," *Business*, July 7). Maclean's reported that Canadian National Railway Co. planned \$1.5 billion in capital spending for 2006. In fact, the amount is \$1.3 billion.

IN PASSING

John Templeton, 95, financier. He was a pioneering mutual fund manager from 1954 to 1992. His Templeton Growth Fund returned a lucrative average 14.6 per cent a year. Devoutly religious, he set up a US\$1.4-billion charity endowment and sponsored a prize to recognize achievement in spiritual matters.

Bob Ackles, 69, sports executive. He started as a water boy for the B.C. Lions in 1953 and rose through the ranks to become the team's general manager. Although much loved in Vancouver, he left to join the NFL in 1966. Ackles returned to Canada in 2002 to succeed Billy Belbin as the club's owner and largely ignored B.C. Lions.

CANADIAN NEWSPAPERS

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Jihad with a hip-hop pose is an easier sell with youth



ANDREW POTTER

International terrorism came to Ottawa a few weeks ago in the form of Muhammad "Big Dink" Babar, the al-Qaeda ringleader and star prosecution witness in the trial of Momin Khawaja, an Ottawa man accused of plotting with a group of white supremacists in 2006. In the opening scenes of a trial that featured rooftop jumpers screaming from the courthouse and urban-level security raids, Babar testified to Khawaja's involvement in what he called "the F" for jihad.

While the most newsworthy aspect of this is that Khawaja, the first Canadian charged under our post-9/11 Anti-terrorism Act, is finally being tried after three years of legal wrangling, what is fascinating is the combination of gangster slang and jihadist rhetoric in a sort of hip-hop jihad—that emerges in the e-mail and surveillance-tape evidence. In one typical e-mail exchange, a London contact named Omar Khan wrote to Khawaja, "How's it's goin' niggas, everything OK?" Khawaja replied, "Yeah, bro, got home safe. How bout you niggas? Everything cool?"

At one point, the cultural distances generated by one too many "wubuhah, niggas" got to be a bit much for Ottawa Superior Court Justice Douglas Paul Ward, who noted that the terms began appearing "to cover a broad variety." By way of explanation, Babar told Wardford, "In one sense, niggas means everyone involved. But to understand which niggas are niggas, you have to know the people and understand from the email who he was referring to." To which Wardford dryly replied, "That doesn't say how another it is."

It is widely thought that the post-9/11 "death of civilizations," in the sense of Oswald Neustadt, is a between Islam and Christianity, which is why George W. Bush took so much heat for his early, clumsy attempts at framing the fight against terrorism as a crusade. The real opponent to Islamic fundamentalism, though,

is not Christianity. What Islamic fundamentalists find far more objectionable than the West's religion is our worship of things like Wal-Mart, Britney Spears, and credit cards. What is troubling then is the fact that resistance to the West among self-styled Islamic youth, or at least those ones, is taking. It consists of what the social critic Mark Lilla has called "a universal culture of the worship of the earth"—a set of symbols and attitudes stolen wholesale from the streets of New York, Chicago and Los Angeles by way of hip-hop, music, videos. From the crime scenes of northern Ontario to the hoodlums of Paris, the gangster pose of American black males has become the archetypal way of responding to cultural alienation, and young Muslims are just the latest to fall for its charms.

But who can blame them? As we described

in part of a deadly campaign to throw some serious noise into the system's workings, if not to bring it down entirely.

Khawaja's trial is a deadly serious business. Five of his alleged co-conspirators were convicted of numerous terror charges in 2007, and will spend most of their remaining lives in their walled lives in a British prison. For all of Babar's vitriolic gangster rhetoric, however, it is quite a very scary dude. He was an associate of Muhammad Ridwan Khawar, the 717 bomber who killed 26 people and injured dozens when he blew himself up at the Edgewood Road train station. Babar has pleaded guilty to U.S. District Court on five terrorism charges related to the repression of a jihad training camp and the purchase of bomb-making equipment, and agreed to testify in foreign terror trials in exchange for a reduction in his otherwise

'Yeah, bro, got home safe. How bout you niggas?' Momin Khawaja writes in one email.



SHOOT DINK'S gangster pose is as threat to the system—it is the system. Not as jihadis.

in books like Lawrence Wright's *The Looming Tower*, the traditional Muslim local. Qaida sounds extremely unpleasant, more so the thousands of Pakistan where there are hardly any girls around, live in the dust, pray a lot, and eat bad food. It's the sort of exotic contrast that isn't going to attract a lot of recruits from urban centers. For disaffected Muslim youth in London or Paris or Ottawa on the other hand, a combination of devout Islamic principle and hip-hop street cred would be pretty hard to resist.

But here's the thing. In North America, the gangster pose isn't a threat to the system—it is the system. Gangster culture is nothing more than recursive capitalism, and a ready explanation is the 2007 film *American Gangster*.

It is not a bad thing, but because of its narrative of gain and drug charges that *American Gangster* has a limited shelf life, while *50 Cent* has parlayed his rhye ballad sounds into a fortune based largely on an investment in vodka water. But, for jihadis, the gangster pose

quantified 70-year sentence.

Our recursive, fatal unity with the post-9/11 era is hip-hop (jihad) the threat, it is partly it is a clear sign of an urban with jihadis an underlying unease with the homogeneity and decadence of global pop culture, but more worrisome still is that it makes the jihadist message that much more palatable to youth.

It is natural to see way of rebellion, men meaning and praying in the mountainous wilds of Pakistan—it is a natural idea that we can't help but see it as a threat. But gangster jihadis? They're kinda cool, a bit scary even, and that's where the danger lies: that other mass media kids, following in the usual confessions of adolescent rage and anxiety, will find meaning and purpose in the embrace of gain and drug charges that *American Gangster* has a limited shelf life, while *50 Cent* has parlayed his rhye ballad sounds into a fortune based largely on an investment in vodka water. But, for jihadis, the gangster pose

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'As a kid I'd watch TV from 3:00 till 12:30 at night. I'd go home every day and write letters to every celebrity I could think of'

HOLLYWOOD'S MOST PROLIFIC WRITER-DIRECTOR, JUDD APATOW, TALKS TO KATE FILLION ABOUT NERDS, CRITICS, AND CASTING HIS KIDS

Q Was being a nerdy kid what made you who you are today?

A: Yeah. The sad thing is that now I'm married, I have two children, my career is going well, but I still couldn't shed the misery of a goofball. The feeling doesn't go away, which I'm finding deeply depressing. **Q:** Come on. You've had a hand in eight movies this year, including producing *Step Brothers* and *Mean Girls*. Eugene, which is pretty much in a few weeks. How can you produce your self-image as a geek when you're basically running an empire?

A: Sometimes I think it's just hard wired, like your brain was wiring that when you were a child and it's impossible to undo the strange damage. You just always have that insecurity. As I get older, I realize older people feel much the same as younger people. You tend to get stuck in your patterns and it doesn't matter what else happens. It's not that you meet some one at a high school reunion who's completely changed.

Q: Did you go to your 10th high school reunion?

A: I did, in 2005. I think *The 40-Year-Old Virgin* [which he directed and co-wrote] had just come out. It was very fun. Actually, I had a lot of friends in high school, I just had acquaintances that were different from most people's. Nobody in my school was interested in comic books or any of the things I was obsessed with—I was completely alone. So when I came

to L.A. to go to film school, I was shocked to find that there were thousands of people who have all the same interests I do.

Q: Was everybody fawning over you as the nerd?

A: Not at all. You know those times when you think, "I'll do well, and then I'll lose my moment of triumph?" People really don't care that much, they lead their own lives. Actually, as I get older, I realize my high school experience was really not that bad. But it doesn't change the fact that I was this awful athlete picked last in gym class every day for 10 years. That's enough to mess up your head right there.

Q: How can your daughters in *Knocked Up* did you know any question about that?

A: My wife was concerned. I really thought that they did such a great job. They did get on with being in other rooms. We didn't want any of that to happen. With me, they're protected and with friends and it's an odd, fun experience. But they're young now, five and 10, and they're becoming more aware of things, like long distances.

Q: How would you feel if one of your kids directed a picture of *geekiness* or *nerdiness*?

A: I don't know. I know my own parents were concerned that I spent a lot of time alone in my room watching TV. I would watch TV from dawn in the afternoon till 12:30 at night many days. I was a true loner. For years, from the time I was in the sixth grade, I would go home every day and write letters to every celebrity I could think of, to

see how many autographed pictures I could get back in the mail. And as a teenager, I wanted to work for a real radio station, not the high school station, where the signal didn't go past the parking lot. So I was able at 15 and 16 years old to talk to a lot of people that I looked up to—Bennifer, Jay Leno, Steve Allen, John Candy, people like that—and ask them what their career path I was taking. "How do you be funny?" The most important thing I learned was patience—every one said it would take a long time. So very early on, I wasn't in a big rush. I was trying very hard to get better. I didn't feel the need to be instantly successful, and that has helped me throughout my years because I try to stay in the mode of learning. When I finish the movie, I instantly think, "What did I do better? What is it I wish at?"

Q: What was your earliest role?

A: Well, I'm not the most visual director. We look back over what *When Knocked Up* [which he wrote and directed] and *Superbad* [which he produced] came out, there are similarities in terms of comedic style, but I would think at *Superbad*, which was directed by Greg Mottola, and think, "Why does his movie look so good? It's very better than mine. Who's he getting that camera alone—how does he do that?" I'm very verbal, I started as a stand-up comedian, so I don't see people running around, but I'm in my story mode.

Q: Do you ever come what crisis in life?

A: I've had movie meetings with terrible reviews. I've had movies make a lot of money with terrible reviews. I've had movies get good reviews and make money. And I like it best when the reviews do well and the reviews are there. I have expectations and then critics, so I'm not a fan of those people who says, "I never read anything." I generally read all of it. **Q:** Which critics do you most admire? **A:** I really like David Denby [at the New Yorker]. He's not too much into reviews and some really rough reviews. He wrote a review of *The 40-Year-Old Virgin* that it was clear that Steve's relationship with the Catholic priest character would be very difficult but ultimately would be worth it. And that gave me some inspiration to attempt *Knocked Up*. Most romantic comedies are about people who have all these obstacles no falling in love, but they're generally pretty soft and loopy. I wanted to try to make a movie about how difficult and painful it can be even when you're in love. When people say some aspects of it are sexist, I think it's because I'm showing some behavior that you don't usually see success stories. But look never says, "I'm going to tear your f---ing head off because you're not doing the right" to Hugh Grant. But in real life, men speak like that. And that's what we have seen things that are equally rough. **Q:** How standard is pregnancy in an insecure, nerdy character. The women in your movies tend to be more together and grown up. What do they see in the girls? **A:** I don't know that the women are more together. Katherine Heigl in *Knocked Up* is meant to be wound tight and career-driven. **Q:** So you're saying the women have better jobs but they're insecure? **A:** Well, as nerdy as the men. If you look at Katherine Heigl's character, the doesn't even seem to have any friends because she's obsessed with her work, and her work is being an entertainment reporter. I don't think the guys are as stressed and the women are together, it's more that the women are pushing. I think it's good to get it together, which I think is a natural sort of life. I don't know a lot of guys who are pushing hard to make their work get it together, but I know a lot of women who are upset with their husbands. **Q:** Aside from your wife, Leslie Mann, who is a lot of your stories, and your producing partner Sherry Silverman, most of the people you make movies with are men. Do you think there's a difference between a male and a female sense of humor? **A:** I'm not very smart about breaking down the comedy in that way. My wife tends to challenge me when I'm working on the female

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roles, she tends to go on about making sure that they have the proper amount of depth, and are not just there to serve the men. One day my wife will make me laugh a lot and is an important collaborator for me, she's always about getting to the truth of the character. But she's not as hard on a funny person. Things just come out funny when she does them. In fact, she got mad at me [if I say, "How do we make this funny?"] She says she wants to make it real.

Q: Some of your best friends—Adam Carolla, Will Ferrell, Ben Stiller, Jon Correy—are comedians, and your next movie, *Mean Girls*, is about comedians. Is that stereotype of the comedian as a person who's crying on the inside, valid?

A: I think every person on earth is crying on the inside. I don't think that's particular to comedians. Everyone has their own private terror. The interesting thing about comedians is that sometimes they're more comfortable with larger groups of people than they are with one person. I think comedians get the approval they need from performing and doing stand-up and from movies, and sometimes that approval allows them not to seem to be comfortable with one person because they're getting so much from so many, and then they don't have to really question how about those are I had a therapist once who said, "It's really harder for successful people to get close because their success supports them in the problem."

Q: A lot of your recent movies, like *Drillbit Taylor*, haven't done as well at the box office. Do you have any plans for your next film, after having another hit?

A: I don't think anyone really cares enough to box office or negative review. You always have people talking on the Internet, but you could read those posts about anything.

Q: Your Hollywood dream seemed shaggy and, at times, friendly and collegial. **A:** A lot of finding ways to have a pleasant experience in Hollywood is having like-minded people you can collaborate with. It's taken me so many years to find studio heads who are fun to work with. I like the creative people. If some of the work isn't shaggy, they're not fun to work with, and then it becomes a little more work, it's not wanted down by committee.

Q: You encourage improvisation and collaboration. You are the same sort of actor. **A:** I'm not a first person. I've brought a TV approach to films. Why didn't that work for me in TV, judging from the casualness of your series, *Friends* and *Seinfeld* and *Uncle Bob*?

A: In TV, you're a victim of the editing and marketing. You can do something very good, and if they happen to put it on at the wrong

time, you might be dead before you're even started. With a movie, if it turns out well, they tend to try their best to make it a hit. Television is much more difficult because of every moment, the network can force you to change things based on their belief about what would make it popular. You're in a constant debate with a guy in your head, and the guy is also a comedian. So it's hard to win the arguments. Unless you're a megahit naturally, you're in for a constant conversation that either leads you to watering down your work, or you fight so hard that they hate you and cancel you. **Q:** What are you best at writing, producing or directing?

A: What's most important to me is the writing and directing. With producing, you're trying to give honor to actors to people who are working on projects I believe in, but I'm also trying to stay out of the way. I'm peop-



I'm not the most visual guy. I'd look at "Superbad" and think, why does his movie look so much better?

ping as anyone. "Maybe you should try it like this," but for the most part I'm creating and managing to make I hope will inspire each other.

Q: Managing teams isn't easy. How did you learn to do that?

A: As the first job I had was casting *Thelma & Louise*. I was 24 and had no idea what I was doing, so I read all these Stephen Covey books like *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. They are actually really good. I haven't read them since, but I have to say, all the answers were in there. ■

IT'S TIME TO TALK ABOUT ABORTION

Alone among developed countries, Canada has no abortion law. Is 'settling' for a non-decision any way for a democracy to behave?



ANDREW COYNE

This is not about abortion. This is about democracy. It's about how we decide things, and by what rules, and how we treat each other when we disagree. Indeed, it is about whether we are allowed to disagree whether dissent on a contentious issue is respected, or cream-skimmed, and whether, in the face of clear evidence over many years that an issue is not settled—that we never settle—a democracy should be allowed at last to debate and decide it. Like a democracy.

The former event-horizon Margaret's appointee to the Order of Canada, on the other hand, now that he's about abortion. There may be some who object out of a disinterested concern for fairness, on the principle that an honour bestowed on behalf of all of the people of Canada should not be given to a man whose life's work is, still, so profoundly against

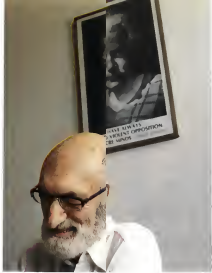
as many Canadians. But for most people, it's about abortion. In honouring him, we are honoring it, normalizing it, giving it with the seal of approval.

Or rather not honoring it, such, but the legal void this represents, it which Margaret said to us to talk to being about the extraordinary fact that, 30 years after the Supreme Court ruling that bans his laws, this country still has no abortion law of any kind. It isn't that abortion—at any stage of a pregnancy, for any reason, and at public expense—is illegal in Canada. It is merely not lawful. When it comes to abortion, we are literally a lawless society: the only country in the developed world that does not regulate the practice in any way.

Perhaps the members of the Order's advice, any could thought the constitutionality of this legal void, after 30 years, regarded a common law based in its favour. Perhaps they thought, by naming Margaret, they

could impress one upon the country. Either way, the decision was revealing—as was the reaction. The letters pages of the country's newspapers were filled for days with passionate demonstrations. Members of Parliament spoke out against it by the dozens. Several members of the Order returned their pins. One had the distinct impression of a dare being put. For the better part of two decades, Canadians who insist on a decent form of abortion, legal limits, however strict, as abortion, have been effectively silenced. They have been told that decision is settled, that it is decided long ago, that no reasonable person could see that there was a case against it. Or else, they were told in a too distant a subject, sometimes by the same people who told them it was settled.

So effective was this campaign that anyone who persisted in arguing the point ended being marginalised as extremist, ultra-conservative, outside the mainstream. (For his part, Margaret dismissed critics of his



strophisms—"a woman's right to choose," in the politician's duffel catalogue. It isn't that abortion has been accepted, in the way that abortion rights advocates would want, as a neutral medical procedure. It isn't simply accepted. Even the citizens on Margaret's Order of Canada table, not of lifelong and public career as an abortionist, or even after part in the removal of the last legal restrictions on the practice, but merely of his commitment to "successful health care options for women."

How did we get here? An entire generation has grown up after the Supreme Court's January 1988 ruling in *Rogers v. Minister of Health* gave us, and we should. So it will no doubt come as a shock to many to learn, not only that Canada has no abortion law today, but that this was never actually decided by anyone. That's not what the Court decided. It's not what Members of Parliament voted for. It just... happened.

What, first, did the Court decide? Did it establish a constitutional right to abortion? Did it find that any legal restriction on abortion was a violation of women's rights? It did not. It's difficult, indeed, to say what the Court decided with any precision. The 5-4 decision is split into an *abortion* and four separate judgments. But what is clear is that no member of the Court concluded there to be the last word on the subject. It was only the law in force of the day—by the way, the 1988 decision of the Criminal Code, the 1988 abortion law that, liberally for its time, first set out the conditions for a free full abortion.

What the court objected to was not the process regarding that women obtain the consent of a three-member "hospital-based abortion committee" as an "accidental" hospital that "communion of the pregnancy... would or would be likely to endanger her life or health." As a practical matter, the court found, this was an abortion out of necessity, where a woman's life or health was in danger. Many hospitals did not have a three-person abortion committee. Many more were not accredited for the purpose. Committee often took their time deciding, and operated without clear guidelines, notably as to how "health" was to be interpreted.

Two members of the court found this meant

the law, on its face a violation of women's constitutional right to "security of the person," did not pass the test of "fundamental justice" that might otherwise have been used. That is, the previous law would women to follow to avoid meeting ahead of the law was too often unavailable to them. Two other judges found the same provision, with its attendant delays and disparities, put women's health needlessly at risk, and in such did more harm to their rights than was "proportional" to the good achieved—the test under the Charter's "reasonable limits" clause. But the judges were equally clear that another law might pass constitutional muster.

Parliament had a legitimate interest, they wrote, in protecting the fetus, and was "justified in requiring reliable, independent and medically sound opinion as to the 'life or health' of the pregnant woman." The present law was overbroad, but "it is possible that a future enactment by Parliament that would require a higher degree of danger to health in the later months of pregnancy, as opposed to the early months" would achieve a more acceptable balance of interests.

The one judge who came closest to an absolute defence of the right to abortion was Justice Bertha Wilson, whose reliably liberal rulings, particularly in matters of women's rights, made her a feminist icon. Yet even the state had "a perfectly valid legislative objective" in seeking to protect the fetus. She agreed with the Court that "the abortion respecting a woman's right to control her own person becomes more complex when the foetus is pregnant, and the foetus is present, and some form of control may be appropriate."

EVEN THE CITATION NEVER USES THE WORD 'ABORTIONIST'



Like the other judges, Judge Wilson favoured a gestational or developmental approach, one that gives greater legal weight to the fetus in "potential life" at later stages of development. This view, she wrote "support a persuasive approach to abortion in the early stage of pregnancy and a restrictive approach in the later stages. In the early stage the woman's autonomy would be stronger. Her reasons for having an abortion would, however, be the proper subject of inquiry at the later stages of her pregnancy when the state's compelling interest in the protection of the foetus would justify it in providing restrictions." The precise point at which the state's

THE REAL SCANDAL IS THE ORDER ITSELF

Let us work to abolish this dubious, vaguely offensive tradition



ANDREW LANKIN

The Order of Canada is more accustomed to giving out honours than being on its own honour roll into question. Lately, however, the venerable body's reputation has fallen into disrepute, thanks to its decision to recognize abortion doctor Henry Morgentaler. It is an odd decision, setting its own standards of class and distinction such as the Order seeks to exempt people who like attending strip parties where a standard water-skiing starts dinging food at the guests. People have recently reacted to the Morgentaler affair according to where they stand on abortion, but that is short-sighted. The controversy's real lesson is to highlight the religious nature of the Order itself. My fellow Canadians: whenever we may need an election, let us work together to abolish this dubious and vaguely offensive institution.

The Order was set up in 1987 to give Canadians an equivalent of the British honours system. There is no denying that over the years many extraordinary individuals have been honoured but one stands out: the "Canadian Capers" of 1980, when Canadian diplomats recognized Americans out of Tehran as great personal risk. They were recognized by the Order. So was Romeo Dallaire, whose efforts to stop the genocide in Rwanda recall Stephen Spender's description of soldiers who have left the vivid air signed with their honour.

Burdensome as the honours are, many of the people who receive the Order of Canada are celebrated in other ways. The former prime minister Kim Campbell, who was inducted alongside Morgentaler's Lankin, said Campbell's role in her party's historic election loss, there is no denying that she is

a widely admired individual—with half a dozen honorary degrees to show for it. As for the Tehran diplomats, George Clooney is working on a screenplay inspired by their story, which, if produced, will be their second film depiction. Dallaire has been the recipient of more honorary degrees and film tributes than Campbell and the diplomats combined, with a school and a street also named after him. In short, if the Order disapproved many recipients would lose only a bullet point on their resume.

Alas, but the Order of Canada is different, its defenders say it is woven in recognition not in the name of any lesser entity such as a school or neighbourhood, but an behalf of Canada itself. The more we take this idea seriously, however, the more we see the

same while disregarding the disagreement, as times pass on, the Order's public attitudes toward what counts as honourable. It is the basic contradictions at the core of its work. The more it purports to make judgments as to who should be recognized, the less it can claim to truly represent Canadians. The more the Order does seek to be representative, the less legitimacy it has in distributing government's collective name.

I can hear the objections already. If disagreement is the issue, some will say, then no one could give awards of any kind. But if you don't like your university or school board's honours, you can take steps to protest. The Order's work is done in secret and not publicly accountable—perhaps unsurprising, given that the British system it emulates is a remnant of the aristocratic age.

Okay, another defence runs, the Order makes some bad calls, but most of its appointments are fairly sound. We need not the controversial figures and the problems solved. But the ongoing nature of the Order's list is debatable. Ten times more awards go to business rather than labour leaders, while many of the philanthropic inductees recognize

PHONY CONSENSUS IS WHAT THE ORDER OF CANADA IS ALL ABOUT



MOST PEOPLE who receive the Order, the Daltons or Louis Lankin, are already honoured in other ways

impossible logic the Order is based on.

To illustrate, consider Lester LaRiv, the Catholic priest who married his Order membership to power Morgentaler's mission. Speaking for myself, I would rather see government did not bestow awards on representatives of the Catholic Church, an institution with which I have deep disagreements. You don't share my view? That's fine. Write a letter or a blog post and we can have an honest debate. But let's not pretend there is some phony consensus where none exists.

Phony consensus, however, is what the Order of Canada is based on. Regardless of where we stand on the Catholic Church, abortion or former Tory prime ministers, the Order has at one time or another been pleased to offer an award in the name of all Canada.

only that individuals can afford to give more to charity in absolute terms. The class bias could not be more glaring. More importantly, if there were agreement on which appointments were controversial, the Order would not have a problem to begin with.

There is nothing really going on here about the Morgentaler appointment. The Order has simply disregarded the beliefs of yet another group of Canadians it purports to represent. Only this time, the group in question happens to be outspoken. Like many abortion moderns, I find Morgentaler's critics overly, but even critics sometimes have a point. The Order of Canada is a religious, undemocratic and dishonest institution that serves no necessary purpose. There's a need for that kind of crazy—but honourable it is not. ■

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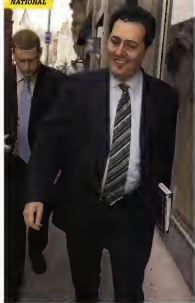
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IT WORKED FOR RICHARD NIXON

To understand Stephen Harper's hold new game plan, look to a cunning former U.S. president

BY PAUL WELLS

Three years ago, Stephen Harper overhauled the team around him in preparation for a new challenge. In November 2001, as a candidate for the Canadian Alliance leadership, he fired the high-ground professional

OLY GROMKO (right), Harper's new chief of staff, visited his home in Ohio last week.

campaigner he had put on the payroll only three months earlier and turned the campaign over to his impeccably but highly motivated friends. In July of 2005, as an Opposition leader who had failed to bring down Paul Martin's minority government, he replaced his chief of staff and fired a swath of his organization. The fire-overhaul, according to the Harper camp's household mythologies, made him a party leader. The second made him a prime minister.

And now he is doing it again. Staffers at the Prime Minister's Office were on short notice for weeks before Guy Grosse took over as Stephen Harper's second chief of staff, replacing the man Harper installed in 2005. Jim Boudry, who resigned but still helped plan the latest reorganization. From his first day on the job, on July 2, Grosse wanted no time clearing house.

The PMO had three deputy chiefs of staff, two had cleared out their desks before the weekend, Keith Boardley as "issues management" and Rosemarie Whitelaw "operations." Subordinates followed both out the door. Ministerial staffers across the capital have been told to report meetings. So-called directors of parliamentary affairs, who help steer their bosses' agendas through the Commons and Senate, have been told "The centre"—Grosse, acting on detailed advice Boudry left him—has confidence in only one-third of them.

Harper and Grosse have embarked on a major housecleaning designed to give the Conservatives new focus and flexibility as a federal election approaches. It will be the first election Harper has had to fight as an incumbent prime minister. He never thought his narrow majority government at would last this long. But since Liberal Leader Stéphane Dion has been gracious enough to grant Harper a summer's respite from an election, Harper does not intend to waste it.

Sources say that at his first meeting with PMO staff, Grosse, a Toronto lawyer who served as chief of staff to former Progressive Conservative premier Mike Harris, made a brief introduction from Harper before telling staff that when the Conservatives convene at the end of September, Canada will be at least a year away from a general election. Now, Grosse said, the government will be at potential pre-election mode with the Liberals and other opposition parties bring them down, or will Harper himself win the fall 2009 federal election date he set as late as 2006.

What will the new focus look like? "Lessons, less bureaucratic, less focus on day-to-day management of government," one senior Conservative said. "We've got a professional public servant to take care of that stuff. Guy

and, 'Let's all remember that we are political leaders, we are not administrators.'" Grosse's take is that of staff to the Prime Minister, but "he will interpret that as being chief of staff to the Conservative Party of Canada."

As if to emphasize that change, Harper's new PMO has a new spokesman: Rory Teneyche, a former ethanol-industry lobbyist who has worked in Preston Manning's old Reform party, in Martin's Ontario government while Grosse was there, and for the federal Conservative Party before he moved to the province's long-standing NDP government. But Teneyche's most recent and significant assignment was running the Conservative Research Group. That 17-member shop, separate from both the PMO and Conservative party headquarters, runs almost constant Internet attacks against the Dion Liberals. Teneyche helped mastermind an elaborate campaign to discredit Dion's most important proposal, the so-called "Green Shift," which would create a carbon tax with income-tax cuts.

Teneyche replaces Sandra Boudier, whose sensitive style and avowed control—every on the record public statement by every cabinet minister, Conservative MP and every diplomat in Canada's foreign service had to be cleared by her in advance—made her the face of Ottawa reporters' contempt. Teneyche has a tricky dual assignment: He hopes to smooth the press policy's stuffed feathers, even as he helps ramp up the PMO's election rebranding.

To accomplish the first goal, Teneyche plans to loosen the PMO's legendary control over communications. Ministerial spokesmen handling calls from reporters will be free—well, free—to decide how to respond, even if only with a prompt, cheerful "no comment." (Two years under Boudier have 12 prepared many ministers' helpers for this dizzying level of autonomy. Many will be replaced before the new rules come into effect.)

When they do convene, Conservative staffers will more often send a partisan spin, and ministers will put everything they do into the context of the coming confrontation with the Dion Liberals. The sweet spot Grosse and Teneyche are aiming at is a less belligerent but even more partisan Conservative government.

The immediate goal is to win an election. The longer-term goal is to steer Harper in for a desirable rebranding of Canadian politics. Some of his oldest friends talk about a Harper rebrand that would be a desirable, confirm the best

ing of Canada's legendarily fractious conservative movement, encourage division within the Liberal party and between Liberals and other opposition parties, and thereby transform the country's political culture.

Getting from here to there, of course, will be tricky. There are no guarantees that Harper knows that for every voter who is implicitly opposed to this continued war at 24 hours a day, there is another voter who thinks he's seen a fast Prime Minister in his life. That coalition hasn't grown much since 1986, but what's less obvious is that it hasn't shrunk either. It's turning out to be a little bit for our purposes today it is better to understand the Harper coalition, not as a matter of geography (Quebec nationalists, Western reformers) but of demographics. Harper appeals, and plans to keep appealing, to middle-class and working-class employees, educators, parents of small children, a housewife, and military families and their supporters. People who believe the pay goes to Ottawa than they are used to getting from it, whether in



HARPER'S new PMO has a new spokesman: Rory Teneyche

money, programs or respect. Harper and a few lawmakers—his strategic chief Patrick Blaney, his undersecretary for justice minister Jean LeBlond—have been thinking about real planning how to connect that coalition with further, and encourage its judicious growth in the months.

THEIR FIRST non-trivial challenge is that looming election.

Conservative party organizers are not pleased with the constant stream of press speculation about Harper's dream of winning a majority. They say no party can hope to win a majority at the next election, and maybe not any time soon after that.

Four parties, the Conservatives, Liberals, NDP and Bloc Quebecois, can each expect to win at least 30 seats in the next election, one strategist said. That takes a lot of seats out of

play, and to hold a majority of the 308 seats, one party would need two-thirds of what's left over. The Conservatives don't expect to do that, partly because they don't expect to make huge gains in Quebec. Pick up another 20 or so of the province's 75 seats? No way. But if the Conservatives can get 110 to 120 seats, thanks to soft support for the Bloc and the Liberals, they will count it a good day for the cause.

So the Conservatives are budgeting for gain, not planning for equality—will would not be surprised if the next election leaves the Commons looking much as it does today. What if it's a wash? Then, too, they'll likely get a surprise, because the two largest parties have built up very different exposures over the past decade.

Liberals expect to see minorities. They kicked out Jean Chrétien because they had a hunch he might finally be reduced to a minority. They led the party into a fourth election. When Paul Martin finally lost for them, they expected a only 18 seats into the poverty line, and then back into the good jobs.

SPOKESMEN WILL BE FREE—WELL, FREER—TO DECIDE HOW TO RESPOND, A DIZZIFYING LEVEL OF AUTONOMY



THIS WEEKEND PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN HALLER

PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN HALLER

Many are already displeased that Stephen Harper has proven a shaky second, and they will not be likely to let him narrow as leader if Harper is re-elected.

Liberal leaders thought much about what follows. Don't resignation would plunge the party into another year-long leadership contest, with a stronghanded Michael Ignatieff facing a strengthened Bob Rae while a third choice looks to become "candidate of choice." The new leader would have to spend months looking up the party's wounds. Even with a minority, the Conservatives would have a year and a half of open air before they even have to begin worrying about the election.

But could Harper survive another election to win a majority? Oh, probably. It's not so years since a Conservative leader won a majority. The irony is as basic as humiliating for all concerned. There isn't a Conservative MP elected below 2004 who doesn't remember several losses, several caucus meetings, days when poll results at the mid-trace felt like a breakthrough. Fendits are glib about those days, but Conservatives feel them as their bodies. If Harper keeps his party in power by the slimmest of margins, they will not be inclined to punish him.

Meanwhile Harper can avoid building his coalition. Like his young chief strategist, Patrick Martin, he is a keen student of earlier examples, at home and in other countries. And anyone interested in understanding what Harper is trying to accomplish could do worse than to pick some high-reaction reading this summer: an eminence new book by a young American historian, Ruth Perkins, called *Perfection: The Rise of a First and the Fall of a Second*.

Perkins is no fan of Rep. Lincoln, but she works diligently to understand what they do and why they do it. The event of second book to explain how the United States went from a chaotic, disorganized land in 1786, when Lyndon Johnson was re-elected, to a historic Republic in 1789, when Nixon died. Perkins's main character "is not Richard Nixon," he writes "it is the war who, in 1964, pulled the lever for the Democrat for president, because to do anything else, it knew that particular Tuesday in November, seemed to court existential chaos, and who, eight years later, pulled the lever for the Republican for merely the same reason."

Wowland, then, is a case study in costly error and the cost of not understanding and seeing the mythic play of all political strategies, the "grimble men," who didn't see for political but through the axis. But Nixon was also a master at deepening the allegiance of his voter base—acquiring Constitu-

tions proud and eager to have him around by identifying strongly with their preoccupations. In preparing for Harper's 2006 victory, Martin noted Nixon's example closely. Both in the way he broadened his coalition and in the way he made the allegiance of his base Harper drew heavily on Nixon's example.

Perkins writes that even an underdog at Western College, Nixon found his coalition to the excluded and excluded. The student leaders were all in a club called "the Freshmen," "well-rounded, graceful, more casually, called thickly" Nixon found a club from everyone left out, the Freshmen, "the students, those not to the master."



SNUBBING MIDDLE CANADA, HARPERLAND, IF YOU LIKE, IS A MISTAKE THE PM WILL NEVER MAKE



PICKARD NIXON, Spide Agency, 1972 (right); strategy chart in this PHO, Patrick Martin

born "Being debilitated by the media was a badge of honor, and it was a Nixon bet was Franklin for student body president, he showed that 'being humbled by the right people was no impediment to political success.' The rest of Nixon's career was a series of appeals to Orphaned voters.

One of Perkins's great insights, and it's doubly compatible to Canada today, is that Nixon rose to prominence in a country where economic growth had created a new consumer class whose wealth he not inherited and whose issues perhaps not the most refined but the left hand the new middle class apolitical. "The liberals whose New Deal created this new middle class were more and more turning their attention to critiquing the degradation culture of the bourgeoisie and the plutocrats and politicians who seemed to enter to the lower consumer consciousness."

"So one group, the liberal voters," Perkins says, "were trying to force for action against Richard Nixon and the elaborate political policy shifts with which he headed the monumental rubes, was becoming part and parcel of a political identity." But there was another group, the one Nixon would eventually call his Silent Majority, for whom "admirable Richard Nixon was becoming part and parcel of a political identity based on a strong through the process of the conservative liberals who seemed to know to reach better than you [and Jacks and Nixon] what was best for your country."

Early on, Nixon diagnosed the press as his "enemy of first resort," Perkins writes. His early coverage is balanced, even laudatory, but he is "the sort to say he was not in the middle of affairs." The newspapers were full of President from family families and money schools, Nixon would not have them, control them, beyond their coverage. As Perkins notes, Nixon's major strategy was to bypass the hall meeting. Perkins's account will be familiar among readers who wanted to cover Harper. "The reporters' frustrated feeling," says (Roger Ailes, Nixon's communications guru) who only runs [for Nixon] affirmed that a one-procedure doors open on they'd be allowed to watch on monitors in a room nearby and intervene the audience after the show. If they didn't like, tough. Ailes showed at what he could not control, Richard Nixon had found a way to be in control."

The blueprint for the Nixon presidency is a memo by a young Republican staffer, Kevin Phillips, "Middle America and the Emerging Republican Majority." Not only can a conservative class be built by money, the Phillips writes, the other liberal media was not. The New Deal created "a new by directing people's resentment of economic elites." Perkins writes in paraphrasing Phillips's argument again, the Canadian parallel is not neces-

ber Jean Chrétien in a democracy, promising to get working-class Canada back to work. But in America in the 1960s in Canada today, for a significant part of the electorate "the new liberalism" was called "the 'boyhood of change'—condemning and self-serving liberals who made their money out of plutocrats, communists, social upheaval, hypocrisy, and violence." In the public opinion of the press, university, Lawrence Wilkinson of American from Maine to Hawaii."

If the press is your enemy and the "Lawrence Wilkinson" your base, certain odd tactics make more sense. Lying, for instance. Or at least being very loose with the truth, cravenly knowing you'll be caught. Because what's exciting you? The Franklin is who "let them possess on your 'muck,'" Perkins writes, "then gives you a wiggle free by making the muck look and disappear. Then you inspire a strange sort of protest love among voters whose wounds of resentment grow alongside your performance of the wound. Your enemies appear to do of their own hand, some of your own. Which makes you stronger."

Which brings us to Pierre Poindexter. He is a young Conservative MP from a riding just outside Ottawa. He had to apologize to the Commons after he wandered while a talk-



CONSERVATIVE MP Pierre Poindexter

radio audience instead, on the day Harper was delivering a solemn policy for decades of abuse in Aboriginal residential schools, whether Canada had received "trials for money" in its treatment of First Nations.

Poindexter is dismissed as a third rate by most reporters in the gallery, and even among Tory staffers he is seen as a guy whose mouth gets ahead of his ambition. But he gets this distinction between the well-read and the well-known in his home. His website

address is www.fightingforyou.ca, and here's the odd thing about the residential schools: blander ones, it was a mistake, and his apologetic stance. His office staff has received for more critical calls and emails from women far his apologetic than it has for his original go-to.

Canada today is blundering beyond its meaning of a mistake. In the 1960s, with its urban riots and its racial and social strife, but the Harper team is usually sensitive to anything that might sound like a salute war. That's why, when a CBC reporter had questions to a Liberal MP investigating Brian Mulroney at a committee meeting, Conservative campaign manager Doug Finley fired off a flaming letter to Conservative supporters, arguing that the words were coming against them and even was true. It was the party's most successful fundraising drive to date.

Stephen Harper knows what happens when a Conservative leader in Canada takes his time for granted. Harper walked away from the Progressive Conservatives in 1987 because he thought Brian Mulroney was snubbing the Liberal man. He will never make the same mistake. He recalls now and then, sometimes speculatively, as he is doing this summer visit to Ottawa. But his eye is always on Middle Canada on Harperland, if you like, and even if you don't. ■

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THE GREAT PIGEON DEBACLE

Once again, farmers fall for a dubious scheme

BY PETER SHAW TAYLOR • Sir Isaac Harris is still working on an ongoing degree when he decided pigeons were the secret to his farm's success. And from Waterloo, Ont.-based Pigeon King International, promised him big returns as a pigeon breeder and so, with his orange-fleshed and fork-torn youth, the then 21-year-old Harris took the plunge. "I was attracted by the huge growth potential," he says, from the family farm in Tapperville, about 10 km south of Simcoe, Ont.

In 2006, Harris bought 250 pairs of brood pigeons from Pigeon King founder Arlen Galbraith. Under that standard Pigeon King deal, breeders bought birds for as much as \$150 per pair and sold the babies back to the company for between \$5 and \$10 each. Harris later added more broods. "It was looking good," he says.

Harris was misled by the lack of obvious market for pigeon meat in North America, and by the fact that all his offspring were simply being sold to new farmers who wanted to become breeders. He believed Galbraith's repeated promises to build a meat processing plant. And he paid no mind to the fact that the issue was investigating Galbraith on the state process of raising a Pouter chicken. What he couldn't guess, however, was the news last month that Pigeon King was bankrupt.

The young farmer now faces the prospect that his pigeon flocks are nothing more than a pile of feathers, beaks and droppings. He's not alone. Pigeon King has had an estimated 1,000 pigeon farmers across North America. But due to one or the same factors farmers have had their dreams dashed in this way.

Despite the obvious unsustainability of a business model based on selling production from one farmer to another in a market—the absence of any consumer market—the concept has a long and colorful history in rural North America, encompassing not only pigeon but, worse, ants, arachnids and cucumbers as well.

One of the most significant examples of this rural pathology was the Jerusalem artichoke.



IN EARLIER TIMES, farmers were taken in by con-games involving worms, ants, arachnids.

chokes. It's hardly often the scheme layered by promoters across the Midwest and Canadian prairies as a new source of income, and a solution to the energy crisis. In fact, the Jerusalem artichoke, a member of the sunflower family, was introduced as a food source, difficult to harvest and lacking in any reliable processing technology. Nonetheless, farmers paid \$50,000 an acre for seed (when in acre of corn seed cost \$180) so they could sell their crop at seed to other farmers, lease to get in on the business. By 1953, the business had practically collapsed and the principle was converted to that of their by word.



GALBRAITH SOLD 1,000-ODD FARMERS ON PROMISES OF A BIG MARKET FOR PIGEON MEAT

In the late 1980s, it was worms, a mysterious livestock whose only market at the time consisted of the sale of copped eggs to other poultry breeders. It happened again in 2003 with worms. Promoters across the Americas sold overpriced worms to buyers as a means to grow new worms to be bought back at \$7 a pound. With no end in sight, farmers grew in several states and the companies for thousands of dollars and then their dream.

And just last year, an estimated one million farmers in China purchased ant farms from the Yihai Tianzi Group with the expectation they could sell new ants back to the firm to make a traditional Chinese medicine used to improve sexual performance. It collapsed when it was discovered the magic ingredient in Yihai's product was preserved frog-grade elderberry, also known as Viagra.

Not every such rural scheme is illegal. Some

are. But many are not. Others are a mix of both. At the time of the Pouter chicken scheme, a promoter relied on recruiting many and many investors to pay those who had already bought in.

But it's there a common thread connecting these rural schemes, regardless of the legal status. According to Minnesota historian Joseph Amato, author of *The Great Jerusalem Artichoke Craze*, the typical artichoke farmer in the 1960s was struggling and desperate to take a risk, however blind. "The artichoke market was built on dreams and hope. Once that gets into people's minds, it can convert rational thinking," he says. "Folks also played a major role in selling the plan." A lot of the schemes were mouth-to-mouth marketing. Amato's results.

The same threads of desperation and faith appear to have played themselves out with pigeons. Bill Tap was called via U.S. salesmen for a six-month period in 2005 and 2006. The job was to target poor Amish and Mennonite groups, largely in Pennsylvania. "Amish people and people of faith tend to think the best of anyone who comes down their way," Tap says. "And Arlen [Galbraith] had to have people with a religious background." Many Amish pigeon farmers he said withered had relatives caught in the same scam in Canada. Tap says the typical pigeon farmer was more of a risk taker looking for a big payoff, like Mike Harris, although one Hutterite colony in Alberta invested \$1.5 million in pigeons.

Tap, whose offer became discredited with Pigeon King's business plan, says one Amish minister from Pennsylvania figured that were no key reasons behind his injured losses after following. "He told me 'It's because we are a very trusting group. And because of the human desire to be greedy.'"

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SASKATCHEWAN FARMER Brad Wall asked Peter Leighton for advice, "for the price of a steak sandwich and an ashtray."

WESTERN UNION

Suddenly Alberta and Saskatchewan have a lot of fears in common

BY NICHOLAS BÖHLER • Back in April, Saskatchewan Premier Brad Wall flew Peter Leighton, the original blue-eyed shank and a former premier of Alberta, into Regina on the provincial plane. "He came out here for the price of a steak sandwich and an ashtray," Wall says. "There was no consultant's fee, although I don't know his real command a big one." One Regina paper described Wall's endorsement at the time as one of "stunning deluge." Curiously Wall, whose province has lately emerged from a long night of economic despair, has much to learn from Leighton, who steered Alberta through an earlier energy lull. But Leighton has come to reach them more from despair. And Wall, quickly ascending as the West's most articulate champion, could soon be forced to channel yippee songs Leighton in a showdown with Ottawa.

Not since the days of the National Energy Program have the Prairies been under such pressure. Then, Ottawa sought to soften the impact of a worldwide energy crisis with artificially low domestic oil prices, leading Alberta's unease. Inexpensive, Leighton went so far as to threaten to cut Alberta's supply of oil and gas to eastern Canada.

Though it soon ended, the NEP became shorthand for Western dissatisfaction with the feds, a beguiling mix of relief and stirring beneath the beds of Calgary oil men and Edmonton political types.

The situation is just as fraught now as then, though the players have multiplied and shifted: a newspaper, more trustworthy field of battle. Alberta remains a target due both to its low environmental policies and massive resource revenues. Threats for Alberta's oilmen, thanks to rock-bottom oil prices, put it at more \$12 billion, greater than both the federal surplus and all the provincial surpluses combined. At the same time, a new Western pact and last year's Regina's financial crisis, even if it's not, Crown land sales have broken records, the price of oil is soaring and agri-fuel is rising the burden of a food market. Only now do the feds have not status. Saskatchewan Premier Brad Wall, quickly ascending as the West's most articulate champion, could soon be forced to channel yippee songs Leighton in a showdown with Ottawa.

Stephen Dixon may have a couple of ideas about where to turn that cash flow. Many in the West see NEP brand oil rising again in the face of the Liberal leader's Green Shift, a levy that would slash oil processors from fossil fuels at \$40 a barrel—offer by personal and corporate tax cuts—which

Don projects would raise \$1.122 billion in revenues. The plan is popular in the West as a way to "hedge the part of Canada's economy that's working really well right now," as Wall put it. Wall projects that 1 billion of that's projected revenue would come from Saskatchewan and Alberta. "Clearly, it's a wealth transfer from Alberta and Saskatchewan to Central Canada, and I think it's a device to prepare us for the political map to stand for the Liberal party," says Wall, who argues that has given up on winning seats in the Prairies. And Wall adds he'll fight "any legislation that will threaten our province's hard status, which we have earned and worked a long time for."

Yet he and Alberta Premier Ed Stelmach have come immediate worries that the passage of a mere Opposition leader. A resolution adopted last month at the U.S. Conference of Mayors annual meeting calls for new standards that would cut consumption in the U.S. at oil sands made "dirty"—carbon-intensive fossil fuel that contributes more to global climate change. "The sands oil starts up at three times the greenhouse gases in the production process per barrel as conventional oil production," says Mayor Roy Perry, of Eugene, Ore., who brought forward the resolution. "We don't want to spend taxpayer dollars on facts that make global warming worse."

And the situation in the U.S. could get even more dire. Last year, President George W. Bush signed a law banning the use of dirty fuels by federal agencies, including the military. The debate over whether oil sands made constant had of more on. But in June, after Democratic presidential hopeful

Barack Obama pledged to reduce U.S. appetite for "dirty, distasteful, and dangerously expensive" oil from senior advisers, Jason Grout, wondered aloud about whether the oil sands should be subject to production. "If it turns out this is the only way to produce these resources would be at a significant penalty to climate change, then we don't believe that these resources are going to be part of the long term," he told reporters.

Butler got the Prime minister's call quick, then, before a possibly preposterous Democratic administration takes over in Washington. Up until recently, though, such messaging has been slow going. In April, after 500 checks descended upon an oil sand tailings

supplier, Indecon, too much stresses the singularity of Canada's oil sand in general. "We're 13 percent of the supply to the United States," he says. "Take that 13 per cent out... what will be left?" Two hundred dollars a barrel? According to a Canada U.S. survey by Hirschman-Heldoff, 75 per cent of Canadians and 66 per cent of Americans say new oil sands development is "a good thing," with 55 per cent of those in the U.S. citing security of supply as their most pressing concern.

THE CARBON TAX WILL "KNEECAP THE PART OF CANADA'S ECONOMY THAT'S WORKING," WALL SAYS



ENVIRONMENTAL concerns and Dean's conduct: The proposals have put more pressure on oil sands development

pond north of Fort McMurray, Ala., only to sink into the sludge and die en masse, Stelmach struggled to convince a story that soon travelled worldwide. Calling the map an "opportunity to tell not only our American trading partner but all the world that we think business is what it comes to the rules and regulations we have in place with respect to protection of environment," the poster went on to complain that the \$35 million earmarked by his government to combat Alberta's negative environmental image in Canada and abroad likely wouldn't match the war chest of environmental groups. "In terms of Dowling's efforts, I've been in that position before," he said.

Stelmach, in partnership with Wall, has had more success persuading U.S. decision-makers of Western Canada's merits as an oil

producer. Presenting Alberta as a cheap, secure source of oil appears to have won over participants in the recent Western Governors' Association meeting in Jackson Hole, Wyo., where both Stelmach and Wall pushed Western oil interests. "When you look at affordability and when you look at energy independence and when you look at resources, all three of those should be enhanced to a noteworthy," Utah Gov. John Huntsman Jr.,

a Republican, said. "We can't let our gas in front of the other." Appl of Democratic government is made similar statements recently after making an Alberta oil sands opinion and seeing carbon capture technology in Saskatchewan, a trip paid for by industrial money. "These are resources that we help immediately," said Congressman Tim Mahoney, of Florida. "Canada has the ability, because they have the infrastructure in place, to immediately expand production."

For Mahoney and the governors in Wyoming, even as they downplay their environmental concerns, the oil sands may be irreplaceable. For Dean, eager to strike out against the Harper Conservatives, alone views from the NDP and the Greens, and draw support from green-conscious Quebec, the oil sands are a personal business, worth the risk of de-anchoring the West. "It's very important for the world to know how much Albertans care about the environment, how much you are green and you want to do the right thing," Dean told a stampede crowd in Calgary. "I cannot accept that your reputation is damaged as it now is." Still, according to recent polling, his carbon plan likely won't make the world more green. This week, Agence France Presse and two-thirds of Canadians didn't even hear of the plan, while 60 per cent of those who had called it a "bad idea."

Murphy is like that place Wall and Stelmach. But the recent clouds gathered on the Prudhoe barometer could just as easily drive Wall's Western supporters to drift from view. Wall says Laughed, on his trip to Regina in April, covered local vigilantes. "We talked about the experience of being pro-science," he says. "Because I think if anyone would have seen the NDP thinking, and finally came, those would have been for a more noise about it." ■

MONEY CAN'T GIVE A MAN HIS LIFE BACK

"To think we are getting it in the freedom and stability this world will provide, we are also justifiably aware that the removal of money could ever truly compensate Stew for the terror of being sentenced to hang at the age of 34, the loss of his youth, or the stigma of living for almost 50 years as a convicted murderer." —Steven and Marlene Truscott on news he would receive \$5 million in compensation from the Ontario government.

The drink for the rich and uneducated

BY PETER BROWN TAYLOR • It is the most controversial drink in the country right now. And thanks to a recent Statistics Canada report, it may also be the most puzzling.

Bottled water has become beverage *rosa* across Canada. Earlier this year the school board for Waterloo Region in south-west Ontario became the first government body to ban the sale of water in plastic bottles in its facilities. Last month, city council in St. John's, Nfld., banned the bottle in city fleet vans. The United Church is also urging its members to boycott it, and universities are following suit. Bottles have already been banned by student organizations ranging from the University of Manitoba students' union to the University of Ottawa geography department.

In to this stormy atmosphere comes a new report from Statistics Canada that answers to the popularity of bottled water, while doing little for its image. The report found that nearly a third of Canadians use bottled water as their primary source of drinking water at home. This preference increases with income, suggesting it's a luxury good. Yet curiously, the use of bottled water declines with education.

Across most categories of social characteristics, income and education typically move in tandem. People who are wealthy tend to have the same likes and dislikes to people who are well educated. Not so with bottled water. The greatest consumers of bottled water in Canada are those with advanced incomes, but no more than high school education. University graduates drink less than students of bottled water in the country, regardless of income.

Such dichotomy is something few have's seen before. Says a puzzled Phil Rothwell, author of the report. He speculates that the income education gap may be due to either a grade being more attuned to consumer mental issues, or shunning price-consciousness for the claims of the water industry. What ever the reason, bottled water appears to be the drink of choice for a whole new demographic, the rich but poorly educated. ■

House calls from our Coast Guard?



THE GUARD is so desperate for results, they're spying Facebook

BY NACHES MENDONÇA • Since the Canadian Coast Guard was created almost a half century ago, its ships have been a discreet but reliable presence along the country's shores, earning the agency the unofficial name of "Coast Truck." But an impending crisis change of Coast Guard's name when demands are set to grow means that grade is going to have to get lower.

Over the next five years, 25 per cent of the Coast Guard's 4,500 employees will be eligible for retirement. The agency projects 1,000 of those who qualify will leave. Meanwhile, staffing demands will naturally increase as the Conservatives have pledged \$1.4 billion to double to equip and expand the fleet, and a recent Senate estimates report calls for an even greater Arctic presence.

To shore off a crisis, the Coast Guard is reaching out to youth in ways it never has before. The Coast Guard College in Sydney, N.S., has more than doubled its intake of officers cadets, and last year it sent promotional CDs to 5,000 high school geography teachers. At the same time, the Guard is getting less paid ideas who can join. Formerly it was mandatory that applicants speak both official languages. Now any word languages will do. Cadets just have to demonstrate the potential to learn both French and English "in some foreign port," says Gary Sheld, the Coast Guard's director general, fleet.

Common sense who have never considered the Coast Guard that it's a cross-section is now changing. Plans are underway to use the social networking website Facebook, although Sheld cautions the agency may not be desperate enough for that word work. For those who do demonstrate a genuine interest, recruitment officers may even start making phone calls. As desperate as that sounds, it may not be enough. Over the next decade it's estimated that there will be a shortage of 70,000 mariners worldwide. ■

Why Victoria still doesn't treat sewage

BY CHRIS HILLARY • When the British Columbia Fund last handed out its report card for municipal sewage treatment, Victoria didn't even rate an "F." It was suspended for being "the only city in Canada that still discharges all of its sewage raw and has not even steps to improve."

That was nearly four years ago, but despite \$2.2 billion in planned funding from three levels of government, Victoria's sewage system is still not working. In the meantime, an estimated 120 million litres of raw human sewage is discharged into the Pacific Ocean every day.

Actually, it looks like the 2012 deadline is optimistic. After all, the Capital Regional District (which contains Victoria) was supposed to deliver a report on how Victoria will treat its sewage to B.C. Environment Minister Brian Topp in office by the end of this year. But on Tuesday, District Board Chair Dennis Blackwell had a meeting with Topp to discuss a one-year extension. Part of the reason for the delay is that they're now considering a more radical approach: 25 small sewage plants scattered across the region, each capturing heat energy and sending it back to nearby houses and businesses.

The idea is popular among environmentalists for its energy saving and greenhouse-gas advantages—and, thanks to projections of oil run-ups in annual net revenue, it's popular among city planners as well.

Perhaps that's why nobody seems too worried about the delay. Christina

Williamson, of the environmental group Georgia Strait Alliance, says she can "live with it," as long as the actual completion date remains unchanged. She's inclined to be patient with a city where Mr. Blackwell's mission for People Opposed to Outfall Pollution (POPOP) is to agitate anyone who thinks the expensive current and chemical qualities of the Jaxco Bay Treatment plant sewage treatment system are just for Victoria.

"There's a certain indignance about Victoria," Williamson says. "They don't like to be told what to do." And there's a lot of sewage in the ocean to prove it. ■



Putin moved to France and had dinner with President Nicolas Sarkozy in the Elysée Palace—an honor that would normally be reserved for the Russian president. Medvedev, however, did not even visit western Europe in his capacity as president until June, when he met with German Chancellor Angela Merkel in Berlin.

There have been centuries of tensions between Putin and Medvedev. But Andrei Soldatov, director of *Agritura*, a Russian

Russia's political and business elite. "While it's true that the lines between tycoon and spook have lately become blurred in Russia—Medvedev would never have found the soccer he has if he wasn't treated by the country's security services—Medvedev is created and a businessman rather than a political ideologue. He never belonged to the Soviet Communist party and has spoken in favor of "economic freedom."

"This doesn't mean human and civil rights are likely to improve, however. Alexey Sidorov, program coordinator at the Carnegie Moscow Center of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, believes that while Medvedev is unlikely to crack down as hard as Putin did against opposition groups and independent political parties, even small advances in freedom will never take precedence over the state's prosperity. "They can ride the whole country like a corporation," Sidorov also said of Medvedev and Putin. "That's why they have such big problems with civil liberties and public rights, because they simply do not take it into account. Simple economic efficiency is much more important."

Many Russians who lived through decades of Soviet quotas, followed by the bookkeeping of the Soviet empire and a punishing transition to capitalism, seem to care more about simple economic efficiency as well. Putin is now benefiting from record high oil and gas prices. It's a one-dimensional economy, and when it collapses, Russia will have little to fall back on. In the meantime, though, neither Medvedev nor Putin will face strong pressure from voters to reform. Opposition parties are weak and receive little attention in Russia's media, which, if not controlled by the state, are usually run by people loyal to it. Those who step out of line are punished.

Last year, state prosecutors brought charges of "extremism" against Andrei Piontovsky, a Russian political analyst and member of the liberal opposition party Yabloko, over statements in his book, *Unlucky Country*, which attacked Putin and his policies. Piontovsky faces up to five years in jail if convicted. The court has not delivered a verdict, but the very act of charging an author and critic of the government sends a clear message that dissent will not be tolerated.

In an interview with Medvedev's *Pravda* magazine, now serving as editor at the Russian Internet think tank, Medvedev will face little immediate pressure to ease this restriction of free speech. "Until this oil bonanza goes wild, the political system is rather stable," he said, adding it's even more unlikely that Putin and Medvedev will decide to liberate Russia on their own. "Both of them have no interest in perestroika." ■

A BIG STUMBLE BY HEZBOLLAH

By attacking fellow Lebanese, the militia lost some legitimacy

BY MICHAEL PITROU • The last time I visited the 1979 born Beirut's trendy Ashrafieh neighborhood, the bar was crowded and the music—loud and thumping—got on my nerves. It was, nevertheless, a cheerful and captivating place. The bar, located on the street that formed the "Green Line" dividing the Christian and Muslim quarters of Beirut during Lebanon's civil war, took its name from the year that conflict began. Inside, the dance was full of western hits, from the dancing cushions, to the fake ballerina walls, to the spray-painted political slogans, and the peloté dancers, in armed, bulletproof vests, dancing a tango near the window.

It should have felt seamless. The war, after all, had killed tens of thousands of people and trashed less than a generation ago. Beirut's damaged buildings were still visible from the street outside. But this was late 2006. Syria troops had just been evicted, following mass protests. Cafes were gilded with stylish signs. And while political conversations sporadically shook the country, and deep, unvoiced tensions between Lebanon's many sects persisted, it still felt like a hopeful time. The

BATTLING in downtown Beirut in early May



LEON LUTHE/REUTERS

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MEDVEDEV wears his position in Putin

think tank specializing in security issues, says there are no barriers. If anything, they reflect a good cap-bad cap image designed for the outside world. And once a Medvedev was to run against his partner, it's unlikely he'd have much of a chance in a power struggle against Putin, who still controls many of the official and unofficial levers of power in Russia. Legitimacy is passed by the Duma, or parliament, which is controlled by Putin's United Russia party. Theoretically, as president, Medvedev could dismiss Putin. "That would members of the Duma, the military, the security services, go along with that?" Sidorov asks. "I highly doubt it."

Any changes under Medvedev will therefore be subtle. He may be a Putin loyalist, but he's not a clone. For starters, Medvedev never worked for the KGB or its successor agency, the Federal Security Service, or FSB. This makes him something of a security vacuum



Tennis, the Rogers Cup, and the Multi-cultural Language of Sport

BY BEN FISHER

The true power of sport is revealed in its capacity to bring together people from different backgrounds in the quest for a common goal.

In team sports such as baseball and hockey, the label of teammate identifies inter-ethnic relationships in a way that takes precedence over alternative tags such as nationality, race, and religion. In individual sports such as tennis, it is the spirit of competition that transcends boundaries and creates a level of equality deeply embedded within the sport.

Though some rules change from country to country and culture to culture, most sports can be widely understood as common, cross-cultural languages. The Olympic Games, for example, unite people from across the globe, all of whom can connect and communicate through their specific athletic pursuits without the need for any interpretation.

In Canada, this sportsworld globalized harmony can be found annually at the Rogers Cup men's and women's tennis tournaments, held alternately in Toronto and Montreal. This year, the men of the Association of Tennis Professionals (ATP) will compete at the Rexall Centre in Toronto, while the Sony Ericsson Women's Tennis Association (WTA) Tour will play their trade at Montreal's Uxiplex Stadium.

In its 127-year history, the Rogers Cup men's event has witnessed champions crowned from 19 different countries, from 17th-century London, Ontario winning the inaugural championship in 1881 to Serbia's Novak Djokovic being crowned in Montreal last year over world No. 1 Roger Federer

of Switzerland. In order for Djokovic to triumph in the week-long tournament, he had to outlast a field of 56 players hailing from 25 different nations.

In fact, in the past 10 years of the event, nine nations have been represented on the championship podium. Dating back to 1998, Australia (Patrick Rafter), Sweden (Thomas Johansson), Russia (Marat Safin), Romania (Andrei Panell), Argentina (Guillermo Canas), the United States (Andy Roddick), Switzerland (Petrus), Spain (Rafael Nadal), and Serbia (Djokovic) have each seen one of their own claim the title at Canada's Masters Series event. This trend seems as though it will continue for the foreseeable future, with nearly 30 countries included in the men's Top 100 world rankings.

What this all means is that tennis has created a culture and language unto itself, whereby players are linked through both their abilities and through a general, familiar lexicon of phrases such as "love" and "deuce." Despite differences in background, the players can establish a sense of communal understanding, experiencing the same highs of raising a trophy and the pain and frustration in defeat.

In Toronto and Montreal, the on-court diversity found in professional tennis is mirrored in the crowds that come out in droves to support their countrymen. It is not a matter of establishing a collective, homogenous tennis culture, but celebrating the multi-cultural diversity that is so integral to the identity of the two cities. It is a regular sight come tournament time to see flags from all around the world waving proudly and enthusiastically, as the fans contribute to what is an electric atmosphere.

And that is what makes the Rogers Cup so very unique to Canada: the best tennis players from around the globe coming together to compete at a world-class event in front of a fan base that perfectly exemplifies this country's diversity.

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SIGN OF THE TIMES? A porch of Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah hangs in a destroyed part of the southern suburbs of Beirut.

1995 but epitomized this. Any country where it was possible to so effortlessly pick lay at the worst and bloodiest results of sectarian strife must have been ready to get these divisions behind it.

Today, some 14 years later, this situation has been shattered, and Lebanon's warring ghosts are once again unfurling the country. In May, fighters loyal to Hezbollah and Amal—Shia Muslim militia and political movements—bravely took over West Beirut after the government tried to shut down Hezbollah's communications network. The fighting killed at least 80 people and exposed the Lebanese government as too weak to stand up to Hezbollah. A divide-and-the bloodshed was followed by the Arab League and led to the formation of a "unity" government in which the Hezbollah-led opposition controls 11 out of 30 cabinet seats.

In other words, Hezbollah, which steadily holds sway over much of southern Lebanon, which fought Israel to a tactical two-year stalemate, and which is a close ally—if not puppet—of Iran, used its military might to ouster a renegade Lebanese government. Who does this mean for Lebanon—a country whose fragmented patchwork of religious communities has always made its reunification difficult and increasingly impossible—and as neighbours in the Middle East?

At first blush, it appears to be an unequivocal victory for Hezbollah's militant and Syrian sponsors. Lebanon's Western-backed government decried Hezbollah's temporary occupation of West Beirut as a "coup," and it is likely true that the militia, had it not held back, could have toppled the govern-

ment. But to leeward intervention violated a long-standing pledge not to attack other Lebanese. Even Hezbollah's opponents could tolerate the argument when it cut itself as a religious group defending Lebanon from Israel. A sectarian militia purporting to kill its opponents is not merely as pitiable as Hassan Nasrallah, Hezbollah's leader, reaps merit and immediately tried to calm Lebanese resentment. Hezbollah, he said last month, does not want "to have control over Lebanon, or to have governance over Lebanon, or to impose our ideas over the people of Lebanon." These are reassuring words, but they count little against the reality of armed men shooting up downtown Beirut.

"While the military operation demonstrated Hezbollah's planning and operational experience, the militia's reputation was also severely diminished," writes David Schenker, a senior fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy and a former adviser for Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and the Palestinian territories in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, in a recent essay. "By running the area of the resistance" against its fellow countrymen—something the militia never it would never do—Hezbollah effectively undermined its regional and local legitimacy. It also ended the long-standing fiction that the Shiite party was committed to Lebanese democracy."

Hezbollah may also soon be losing one of its two major international backers, Syria. Israel and Syria have both confirmed that peace negotiations are underway. Any deal

will require Syria to muzzle Hezbollah. "Damascus is preparing for a Syrian return to Lebanon," reports Strategic Forewarning, a private intelligence agency, "and this time around, Hezbollah's Syrian patron is more likely to end up as the Shiite group's jail keeper."

It is still much, much too early to predict Hezbollah's demise, or even a sharp reversal of its recent ascendancy. A loss of Syrian support would hurt but not double the militia, especially given Syria's decreased influence in Lebanon since 2001. Hezbollah remains the most powerful military force in Lebanon. It combines arms of strength with popular social programs that earn it grassroots support. In work rebuilding homes destroyed during the 2006 war with Israeli-backed forces by Iran—its most effective tool for government efforts to do the same, for example.

But for the first time since the war with Israel two years ago, Hezbollah has squandered its position. Lebanon will never thrive as a democracy as long as Hezbollah dominates in a parallel state within its borders. Meanwhile, Lebanon's violent and divisive past no longer seems as tragic or irreversible as it once did. Chances are, months between Beirut and Amman in the northern Lebanese city of Tyre killed at least four people and drove hundreds from their homes. A heavily blast-lane exploded an apartment block in the city, killing at least one and wounding dozens. The 1975 law in Beirut has died. ■

PHOTO: AP/WIDEWORLD

BOB LEVINE/AMERICAN



PAKISTAN'S OUTLAW ENTREPRENEUR

Corruption, neglect in the Tribal Areas have created 'freelance militants' BY ADHAN S. KHAN

It's a sparse compound, a single acre wall-in empty space surrounded by the bare expanse of Pakistan's Rhyber tribal Agency. A man 40 years in the northwest in Pakistan, the capital of the North West Frontier Province and the last post standing against the burgeoning fundamentalist Islamic movements push out from Pakistan's lawless tribal regions. The heavy machine guns lining the dusty compound fence, surrounded by groups of different Islamic militants, tell part of the story there is a revolution afoot, at once.

This is February 2007. A few months from now, these same militants will be beating Pakistan's military. But for now the atmosphere is calm, even light-hearted as Mungai Bagh, leader of one of the more powerful of the new militant groups—Lashkar-e-Islami—talks openly with local tribal elders. Bagh, a soft-spoken 40-year-old with the long hair and bushy beard typical of a Wahhabi-influenced Islamic fundamentalist, is busy mingling various disputes between rival tribal clans.

Outside the compound, a line-up of arms 50 feet away is waiting for its turn to be fired. Over the last two years, from his base here in Bana—a disorganized village in the Rhyber Agency, one of seven self-administered areas in Pakistan's remote tribal belt bordering Afghanistan—Bagh's influence has grown exponen-

tially. Over the coming months, he will extend his reach, threatening neighboring Fehar was, gateway to the Rhyber Pan and a key supply route to Afghanistan by coalition forces. He will start a tribal war with the Kolabell clan, a powerful subgroup of the Afghani tribe, one of Pakistan's richest, with deep roots in the drug trade. And he will eventually bring the wrath of the military down on him—unopposed launched in the old of June, called "a show of force" by Pakistan, that left little changed. Bagh remained free, and defiant, with the military turning to local elders to broker a peace deal.

The Pakistan government first took action was when in August in December 2007, when they demolished a market run by his men in the heart of Bana, reportedly to punish him for running a proxy Islamic government in Rhyber. Government officials tell Mungai the market was a hub for drug trafficking. Bagh denies it. "When I stepped the drug dealers," he says, "when I thought peace to the area, then the government attacked me. People want Islamic law in this area. They are following the rules of their own free will."

This is only partially true. In the last two years, Bagh has imposed a kind of order to his corner of the Tribal Areas. But the absolute rule of armed fighters walking the streets of Bana enforcing Bagh's brand of Islamic law undermines his argument that the people

LOCALS SAY Mungai Bagh used to be a taxi driver with a side business in the taxi trade are willing participants. And rather than allowing the drug trade, Bagh is in fact profiting from it. In the ruins of his market, truck drivers have set up shop. He now controls drug trafficking in Bana, as well as gunsmuggling and a host of other illegal activities that are the staples of the tribal economy. This has put him at odds with the Kolabell tribe.

That obviously means war. "The government is against us because they support our enemies," Bagh says. "They want the money from this area. But we will not let them have it." The Kolabell clan has close links to the Pakistani government, and the battle between Bagh's Lashkar group and the Kolabell is in essence a war of Islamic militancy against pro-government forces.

A similar narrative is playing out throughout Pakistan's tribal belt. Peace deals brokered by Pakistani authorities with Taliban-backed militants have invariably been broken by local tribal elders. Bureaucrats occasionally broken out between these pro-government groups and militant factions. But in Bana, the case is slightly different. Bagh insists he is not staged such a rebellion. His is a local movement and he is no Islamic fanatic. His rise to prominence as a neighborhood leader to be a taxi driver with a side business in the taxi trade.

"Mungai Bagh is a mafia in the way justice was brought out in Rhyber Agency," says one government official. "It's his product of the way the people were being treated by the powerful tribes." Years of corruption and economic domination by a few tribal nobles has disenfranchised much poor people throughout the region, opening the floodgate to tribal violence. That has had catastrophic effects in Pakistan. Opponents like Bagh have filled the vacuum left by the disappearance of traditional tribal structures.

Seized this compound in Bana, surrounded by his armed followers—many in camouflage—Bagh insists that his is a populist movement. "None of my fighters are paid," he says. "They are all volunteers." The disenfranchised tribesmen who have taken up arms, as many as 2,000 boys with guns, pose a serious threat to the newly formed Pakistan government. Though the Pakistan operation last week was intended to wrest control of the Rhyber Agency from Bagh, its failure to do so is a testament to the power of Bagh's brand of Islamic militant rule. It could take a fight that has lost to do with the tribes and the war in neighboring Afghanistan and more with fighting the decisions that years of corruption and neglect in the Tribal Areas have created. Bagh is the first of these decisions to rise its ugly head. More will likely follow. ■

One road to good news: legislate it

BY RACHEL MENDELSON • Is the constant inflation rate of around nine million per cent, Zimbabwe in full of billions and trillions who can't find their families? Last week, hyperinflation forced the African nation's central bank to quadruple the daily bank withdrawal limit to \$100 billion, enough to buy two tons of cooking oil and a bar or two of soap. And meet the government demands most want us to be paid through three deposit, quarters to "improve the general climate" and offer a "balanced view of everyday life."



IN ROMANIA, 90 per cent of the news may soon have to be positive

Some Romanian journalists dissent the bill, which must get through constitutional court this week and then be approved by President Traian Basescu before becoming law, as a joke. "It's completely stupid," says Vlad Petreanu, a television producer in Astoria. He says the push for good news as a reaction to the media's shift toward a stingy drive, "what Basescu, leads" morality. To others, the motivation appears more trivial. The chair of the European Federation of Journalists, Anna König, decried it as "obvious political interference" in media, which have enjoyed autonomy since the 1989 revolution. The legislation does not define what constitutes positive or negative content, the fear is that it could become a tool for propaganda by the upcoming elections, says Michael Berk, editor of The Diplomat in Bucharest.

What's baffled many is how the bill, now laid in part by a recently established anti-corruption court (who in a city mayor had park benches and garbage bins painted in Romania's blue, yellow and red, even made it to its senate. Considering its upper arm violation of the Romanian constitution and the European Convention of Human Rights, says Petreanu, "everybody's pretty sure it won't pass." Killing it is less certain. It has year a bill outlawing the publication of opinion polls before elections was sent back to the senate, where it will hangar. ■

\$50 billion buys three bread loaves

BY PATRICIA TREMBLE • With an annual inflation rate of around nine million per cent, Zimbabwe in full of billions and trillions who can't find their families? Last week, hyperinflation forced the African nation's central bank to quadruple the daily bank withdrawal limit to \$100 billion, enough to buy two tons of cooking oil and a bar or two of soap. And meet the government demands most want us to be paid through three deposit, quarters to "improve the general climate" and offer a "balanced view of everyday life."

Since the economy collapsed in 2000 after President Robert Mugabe expropriated white-owned farms—the core of the nation's business sector—the government has kept itself afloat by printing Zimbabwean dollars in higher and higher denominations. Currently the largest banknote is \$10 billion—which could buy three tonnes of bread or a car of toilet tissue—and it comes with an expiry date, though the note will be worthless long before it officially expires when Zimbabwe has learned to stop it. The few able to afford a dinner can't wait to pay for everything, including drinks, at the beginning of the month, to avoid paying higher prices at the end of the evening. And with cash amounts unable to deal with a rising economy, stores have closed their doors from their prior and then unduly the receipt price by a million.



CASH REQUESTERS are unable to deal with so many zeroes

But even this bizarre system was dealt a blow last week when the German banknote firm Giesecke & Devrient bowed to demands for international promotion and announced it would "suspend delivering banknotes" to the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe with immediate effect. "Though central bank governor Gideon Gono vows to "assess and try to replace the crisis-affected paper it would now inflation may be the one problem Robert Mugabe can't solve through torture, murder and intimidation. ■

This palace is a mess, Your Majesty

BY ALEXANDRA GRIMO • Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, whose personal life is pegged at an estimated \$670 million, cannot afford to change the wallpaper, in the least, repair the crumbling masonry, nor



THE ROOF leaks, the wallpaper's peeling; there's no cash to fix it

remove the asbestos in her official residences, according to a new financial report. Most of the state's income is now being redistributed by the Queen's charity to the throne in 1957, while parts of the electrical wiring at Buckingham Palace date from 1948. At Windsor Castle, only the state rooms that were damaged by the 1993 fire have been redecorated. According to royal aides, the Queen worries she will have to entertain guests in rooms with peeling wallpaper. Of particular concern is the leaky roof over Buckingham Palace's picture gallery, which houses works by masters such as Rembrandt. In 2007, a chunk of the facade fell off the palace, narrowly missing Princess Anne's parked car.

The Queen's accountant, Sir Alan Kirk, who has the decidedly plain title of Keeper of the Palace, says the backlog of essential maintenance and repairs has grown because the government has been skinting funds allocated to the upkeep of Her Majesty's official properties. (In return for the profits of the Crown Estates, the government pays to maintain the palace.) For the past 12 years, these funds have been held at £13 million. The royal household has made separate requests for more money, all rejected. The palace estimates it would cost \$10 million to fix the leaking and rewrite the buildings, a price tag that doesn't include redecoration costs. Aides believe Her Majesty is being squeezed out by the cost of the London Olympics. "We were unsuccessful in raising more money from the government," Kirk says. "It was a major disappointment. That money was badly needed." ■

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO BILL

In business, Bill Gates ruthlessly crushed his opponents. Now, he's taking the same approach to saving lives. BY STEVE MARCH

When the business goes looking for the man who the world charged for Bill Gates, they might want to consider a visit to the founder and then CEO of Microsoft took to South Africa in 1997. Life was mostly gifts of their own products. In this case, the company had provided a computer and software to a new community center in Soweto, and Gates was there to take part in the grand opening.

It was all smiling children and glad handing dignitaries, but the scene had no electricity. They had run an extension cord to a generator so that the kids could use the computer. When the power went out, the kids would be left in the dark. Gates said to a speech a couple of years ago: "That frustrating day must have provided a spark that ignited

the biggest and most important philanthropic effort in modern history.

Last week, Gates walked away from the software juggernaut he created to dedicate himself full time to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, which he began with his wife eight years ago with the goal of bringing billions of dollars in aid to some of the most intractable problems in global health and education. From now on, he plans to spend about 15 hours per week offering guidance and insight to Microsoft, and the rest of his time figuring out how to spend more than a billion dollars a year in the service of humanity. It's harder than it sounds.

For all his amazing successes in the world of business, Bill Gates is still partly considered a geek, transformer figure. To his many critics, Gates is a guy who ripped away one important idea in the 1970s and then spent three decades exploiting it and ruthlessly defending his monopoly at all costs. The fact is, Gates planted the seed of the world's first, and still biggest, software mega-corporation 30 years ago when he lawlessly envisioned a world in which there would be a computer on every desk, in every office and



SOFTWARE made Bill Gates the world's richest man. Now he's giving away \$50 billion every hour. When he convinced IBM to let his little company create an operating system for their personal computers, and to let him license that system to other manufacturers, he triggered what would become the personal computer revolution. Suddenly, computers were standardized. Suddenly, whether you bought your machine from IBM or HP or Compaq, they all worked the same. They could even communicate with each other.

Even now, despite rising competition, quality problems, copyright challenges and rampant piracy, Microsoft still sold in \$15 billion in sales last year. That alone should qualify Gates among the all-time greats of corporate success. But people still sneer at Bill. The Google guys are snarlier, they say. He's nothing but a bully. And besides, he's a geek. With his glasses, his skinny frame, and his affinity for rumpled blouses and button-down dress shirts, it's easy to underestimate him. See him alongside Bill Clinton or Boris Yeltsin, or any of the philanthropic gizmophiles who have become his closest allies, and he always looks like somebody's twelfth-grade teacher. But take a closer look at the man: he's a member of a pantheon you may look at him differently.

Over the next 50 years or so, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation will give away close to \$10 billion on projects as complex as vaccine discovery and as simple as the distribution of mosquito nets. If Gates can be half as successful in this as he was in reshaping the world of computers, then he will bring the world of aid and philanthropy into the era of globalization and mega-wealth.

The question is: can a cut-throat businessman, admittedly short on personal charm, who spent the first two-thirds of his life dedicated to creating business empires and thumbing his nose at government regulators transform himself into a selfless beacon of generosity? Well, it's happened before.

At the turn of the last century, John D. Rockefeller was the most feared businessman in the world. He had built Standard Oil into an untouchable monopoly and all but created the modern oil industry. According to legend, he would invite resistant rivals into his Cleveland office and show them the books so they could see what they were up against. Over the years, Rockefeller was widely maligned, but he would calmly explain that they could either refer to him or be driven out of business, at which point he'd buy their assets at auction. In 1904, muckraking journalist Ida Tarbell published her exposé of Standard Oil, painting Rockefeller as a cruel and ruthless bully.



And in 1995, the government asked that Stanford OI had illegally stolen its monopoly position and split it into its separate companies, Initiative, the firms that would become Chiron, Mell, Eason and Corcoran.

Rockefeller would have seen a kindred spirit in Gates. For one thing, both men practically invented an industry themselves, says Ron Chernow, a business biographer and author of *The Life of John D. Rockefeller Sr.* They both also held a deep belief that the success of their enterprises had substantially enriched and helped the people of the world. Rockefeller by providing affordable fuel to expand the economy, Gates by ushering in the communications revolution.

But by the late 1990s Microsoft's dominating power was equally cooking. The Internet was proving to be a more difficult business to dominate than software. The complaints about its allegedly toxic software and its without appreciation of rivals were getting louder. Gates was more famous for his personal wealth, and for his legendary transition to the shore of Lake Washington, than for his role as a technology visionary. Finally, just as Stanford OI, governments began to sound Microsoft for being a predatory monopoly.

Like Rockefeller, Gates felt uncomfortable. To some, it was only a matter of time before Gates began to ask "what's a child?" Through luck and seems he stumbled into the great fortune of modern times," says Howard Means, author of *Money & Power, the History of Finance*. "But that's not a legacy. The legacy is what he does with it."

"Rockefeller had been through an anti-trust battle and a lot of controversy and he wanted to do something that was vaguely good," Chernow says. "That's why he focused on health and education, and I don't think it's a coincidence that Gates is focusing on health and education. You know, nobody is going to fault you for doing up

MICROSOFT USHERED IN THE AGE OF THE PC. BUT GATES IS STILL SEEN AS A LUCKY GEEK.

with a malaria vaccine." Specifically, Rockefeller found direction by emulating his contemporary Andrew Carnegie.

Carnegie had built his phenomenal fortune in the steel business. By 1899, with his empire at its apex, he began turning his attention to the moral implications of his prodigious wealth. He published an essay, now known as "The Gospel of Wealth," which produced the memorable quote: "There is no class so pitifully wretched as that which possesses money and nothing else."

He argued that the greatest danger of extreme success is that large fortunes will be frittered away on extravagances and passed down to children who are ill-equipped to handle the responsibility. To prove the point, he alluded to the "great families" of Europe, which had been managed by a succession of greedy, dim-witted heirs. "In monstrous countries, the estates and the greatest portion of the wealth are left to the first son, that the vanity of the parent may be gratified by the thought that his name and title are to descend to succeeding generations unimpaired. The condition of this class in Europe today reaches the height of such hopes or ambitions."

Carnegie challenged his fellow industrialists to dedicate their latter years to serving the public good. That way, he said, the benefactor could enjoy the fruits of his generosity and wield some personal control over the way



of his assets. Carnegie gave away almost his entire fortune—the modern-day equivalent of roughly \$1 billion—to fund thousands of free libraries around the world, to establish the Carnegie Institute of Technology, and to endow the Carnegie Hero Fund to reward acts of selfless heroism.

By doing so, he built a legacy that stood far above the taints that crested his fortune, and Rockefeller sought to do the same. "Rockefeller was certainly aware and very much influenced by Carnegie's precedent," Chernow says. "Rockefeller felt because of the sheer size of his fortune, he had to pioneer what he called 'wholesome philanthropy.' He wanted something that could provide universal impact, rather than just social welfare."

The most of Rockefeller's largesse is still astounding, even today. 75 years after his death, just 20 years after the end of the Civil War, he funded a college for black women in Atlanta that would become Spelman College, he provided \$60 million to start the University of Chicago and continued to pay much of its operating budget for years thereafter, in 1903 he created the General Education Board, which was active in the building and support of black schools in the South, and in 1904 he founded the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research in New York City—a revolutionary approach at a time when medicine was still largely a pseudo-science.

Rockefeller's efforts went beyond funding educational institutions. At the turn of the century, hookworm infection was an epidemic throughout the southern U.S. The government was hampered by walking barefooters in muddy fields, causing anemia and chronic fatigue. Many farmers



BILL AND MELINDA (see, info on following), the model of the great industrialist/philanthropists John D. Rockefeller and Andrew Carnegie

believe more than half of southern children were infected, and that it was largely responsible for the emergence of the "lazy southern" so common in the culture and literature of the South. Rockefeller's children launched a massive treatment and prevention program, including giving shoes to thousands of poor farm families, and virtually eradicated the plague within a generation.

If Rockefeller was looking to follow the path of a tough-and-tumble business titan, it worked. "The way that the most hated person on earth in 1903 when I.D. Bell's book came out," explains John Steele Gordon, author of the book *C.O.C. A Business History*, "that people don't really remember the Rockefeller of Standard Oil. They remember Rockefeller University, the University of Chicago, The Rockefeller Fund, and all the great works he did."

Handreds of charitable foundations have been set up over the past century, many taking their inspiration from Rockefeller and Carnegie, but none has approached their level of public impact. Bill & Melinda Gates may be about to eclipse them both.

Let's be honest: If Gates was looking for good press, the obvious and easy thing would've been to give off a few billion, make some big donations, and get his name on the side of a few hospitals. Those who know Bill and Melinda Gates say it's simply not in their character. Instead they seem to have poured themselves into the monumental task of changing the seemingly unchangeable. But then, to wit, not even Rockefeller or Carnegie has ever lost this kind of focus, self-worth and independence for a day. By the time he died in 1917, Rockefeller had given away \$500 million—the modern equivalent of more than \$6 billion. A conservative forecast suggests the Gates

foundation will easily give away to times that much—at least \$10 billion of Gates's own money and another \$10 billion pledged by Warren Buffett.

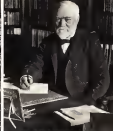
And so, the Gates foundation has a chance to redefine philanthropy for the modern age of globalized trade and spectacular individual wealth. More says: "I'm not seeing Carnegie's 'Gospel of Wealth' to deal with a world in which people can and do spend personal bank accounts bigger than Guatemala's economy, a world in which 10 times more money is spent trying to find a cure for baldness than a cure for malaria. I think he's performing an immensely useful function in a time of highly concentrated wealth." Means says: "He is modeling how to deal with being richer than any human being on the planet."

But ambition and benevolence are one thing. Actually making "The Gospel of Bill" yield results worthy of his endowment will be far more difficult than it sounds.

A few years ago, Bill and Melinda were trying to educate their kids (Maxwell, now 12, Casey, 9, and Phoebe, 6) about some of the ways they were working for, when one of the kids began pressing them on why they weren't out in poor countries more, missing to the sick and dying. They showed the older kids a documentary about polio in Africa, and one of the children pointed to a boy on the screen, asking whether they had helped him, and whether they knew his name. Melinda explained that they were trying to help kids like him, but they didn't know his name.

As Melinda tried to explain that there were different ways to help beyond working in a hospital, he said a typically blunt explanation: "It is so whole, not just."

This surely didn't mean much to the kids, but his echo of Rockefeller's "wholesome philanthropy" concept gives a telling insight into the principles that Gates is aiming to bring



to the world of global health outreach.

By all accounts, Melinda was the driving force behind the creation of the Foundation, driven to partly by messages she received from Bill's mother, Mary, at her 1993 birthday dinner. Mary Gates had been a lifelong volunteer and campaigner with the United Way, and she told Melinda that money into the Gates fortune would bring with it hefty responsibilities. With an M.B.A. from Duke University and a natural ease with people, Melinda was a natural epidemiologic work from the start. Early on, she and Bill settled on the two key questions that would guide their giving: which problems affect the most people? And which of those problems have been largely ignored in the past? That's why they don't give to big, well-known charities like the Cancer Society or the Heart Association. Though the long run, their focus has been on things like acute diarrheal infections, tuberculosis, AIDS, and malaria, malaria—a thing that kill people by the millions. "We want the world to allocate resources knowing that the death of a child in a poor country is every bit as tragic as the death of a child in a rich country," Bill explained in a speech last year.

The specifics of their grants reflect Bill and Melinda's differing priorities. Bill is fixated with technological and systemic advances that might strike at the heart of a disease. He pushes for "deep science" projects like research into a malaria vaccine and the use of technology to reform elementary education in the U.S. Melinda is more focused on so-called "intervention techniques" that provide immediate relief—bed nets to protect people from the mosquitoes that spread malaria, vaccines and interventions that prevent the spread of AIDS. The foundation receives roughly 6,000 requests each year, and the founders personally evaluate applications seeking more than \$20 million. "That is really



GATES IS NOW a global anti-bulldozer with the likes of Warren Buffett and Bill

and face if the prospect of being suspended from the program.

There were plenty who said GAVI was no strings, but Gates made no apologies and eventually recipient nations complied. The scheme, however, highlighted an aspect of Gates's personality that's rarely mentioned: his charitable work—to put it bluntly, Gates can be a real jerk. He can be arrogant, short-tempered and volatile, and he's definitely taking his contempt for those of lesser intellect—always a problem when you're almost always the richest man in the room. McDonald's national ad campaign has helped smooth his bulldozing rough edges. Still, talk isn't always head work.

At the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland last year, Gates took part in a panel discussion with William Easterly, a New York University economics professor and prominent critic of inefficient foreign aid. Easterly was complaining about the lack of economic development in Africa despite trillions of dollars in aid spending over the past 50 years, and Gates snapped, "I don't praise it when a fool lives, it will cause a GNP increase. I think life has value." Uncharacteristic silent scream.

Gates tends to leave bruised egos in his wake, but he makes his points. He believes governments, charities and corporations need to work together to create progress in the developing world where profit margins might be small but the opportunity is enormous. Says Microsoft's, for example, has spent millions developing a nonprofit computer interface that would allow African people to operate a computer. That has the potential to open up profitable new markets, but it also directly targets a poor population that normally doesn't get in the radar of big companies because they don't have enough money. Bill has dubbed this his call for "creative capitalism" and it has attracted as much as cheering from both the left and the right, but there's no doubt Gates has put money where his mouth is.

Perhaps the greatest endorsement came in 2006 when Gates's long-time friend and fellow billionaire Warren Buffett announced he would give \$10 billion to the Gates Foundation, effectively doubling its endowment.

THEY'RE NOT JUST THE FOUNDATION'S CARDS. Gates is now a global anti-bulldozer with the likes of Warren Buffett and Bill

"If your goal is to return the money to society by attacking truly major problems that don't have a common enemy funding hate," he said at the time, "what could you find that's better than turning to a couple of strong, young, who are ungodly bright, whose ideas have been proven, who already have shown an ability to take it up and do it right?"

Strong, ungodly bright, well-funded and financially adroit. Well, they'll have to be. Malaria still kills a child every 30 seconds in Africa. Tuberculosis claims another two million lives annually and that number is growing. AIDS claims 6,000 a day. Bats weigh 100 lbs half a million dollars annually. Hundreds of charities and government agencies and NGOs have been fighting at the edges of these problems for generations. Bill has been quiet, but the plagues are still raging. In short, progress computer on every desk in North America was child's play compared to the challenge Gates has set for his final act.

But that, Chernow says, is not it should be Rockefeller believed that the very wealthy must change philanthropic umbrellas worldly of the size of their bequest. Gates built an unprecedented fortune, and now has taken on an overwhelming set of challenges: inevitable disaster, epidemic poverty, the state of basic education in Africa, even the state of modern capitalism.

It's an undeniably noble endeavor, but Gates doesn't want to talk about any of that. *Admission: show how he'll like to be remembered. He cut off the interview. "I don't think about how I'll be remembered."*

Perhaps that's just as well. Gates doesn't put his name on his philanthropy. They're never going to build statues of him on the White House Mall. They'll probably never make movies about him, assume they'll be his. A hundred years from now, if he's still remembered as it'll likely be a modern plaque in any place in Africa and Asia where his efforts might have saved thousands of lives. But he won't be forgotten either. "Making \$50 billion before you're 50 is a good way to become a legend," Gordon says. "He'll be remembered for having made a phenomenal fortune, then having done an enormous amount of good with it. There are worse legacies to leave behind." ■

The 'Back to the Future' shoe, maybe



IT'S A 'TRIBUTE' to the McFly shoe, but it's not the McFly shoe

BY KATE LUNAG • In the year 2015, people will ride hoverboards, drive flying cars, and wear really cool shoes—at least that's the future envisioned in the 1989 film *Back to the Future 2*. Stuart Fox, who has long lobbied Nike to recreate products the futuristic high tops worn by the film's Marty McFly character, may finally get to live part of that dream. The athletic company has just launched a line of basketball shoes that look a lot like the ones Marty was wearing. But there's a hiccup: Nike seems reluctant to admit that these are really McFly's shoes.

Last week, the company released the film and released *Hyperdunk 2015* in the same release. Marty's long-wish "2015" emblem on the tongue. *Back to the Future* even showed up in an *Instagram* for the launch. With only about 100 available at the event, the *Hyperdunk 2015* will cut first—and was soon gone for over \$2,000 on eBay.

Meanwhile, the regular *Hyperdunk* sneaker recently went on sale in Canada. But when asked if the *Hyperdunk* is based on McFly's shoes, Nike Canada's Mark Cowlin first said "there's no design inspiration from the *Back to the Future* shoe," then backtracked through a spokesperson who admitted the film provided some "design insight."

Why all the confusion? Why not simply market it as the shoe that took to the Future? "Convincingly because the movie was so widely loved," says Sam Vakrent, president of the youth marketing firm Technography, and Nike doesn't seem to have a deal with Universal, the film's production company.

Whatever the reason, Nike's "tribute" is the original concept shoe "at least" for the first time. "Nike Hyperdunk might be inspired by the McFly shoe, but the Nike Hyperdunk is not the McFly shoe," (emphasis) *Memorial University* professor who has analyzed at 20,000 sneakers to convince Nike is the real deal. It's not just how to make the shoe, it's the shoe itself. Nike's new shoe is now on sale. ■

World's most expensive streetcars?

BY COLIN CAMPBELL • Bombardier may be headquartered in Montreal, but there's little doubt as to where Canadian city days Toronto. Two years ago, the company was awarded a \$676 million contract to build a streetcar for the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC). Now that it's emerged as the only major company in the world's richest light-rail market—a \$1.25 billion project to build 304 streetcars for the TTC.

Bombardier's only serious rival for the contract, Siemens, dropped out of the running last week. The only other competitor is a small U.K.-based start-up called *TRAM Power*, which claims to have built only one streetcar (and it caught on fire).

For Bombardier, the Toronto contract is a huge win for the company's most recent in which it's the only one that's been built. The project would be the icing on the cake—not in small part because it's the only one that's been built. The only one that's been built.

At \$1.25 billion, the budget for the project is a lot more than most other projects. It's a lot more than most other projects. It's a lot more than most other projects.



TRAM POWER only over made one streetcar—and it caught on fire

per car. The TTC says at budget is higher because it includes things like the operating, training and repair costs. Plus it needs cars that can handle light rail and streetcars, says a spokesman. And Bombardier says the contract would most likely include a set of cars made by it in 2015. But that contract, which included 300 streetcars and maintenance, was worth only about \$4 million per car.

With the competition still officially open, Bombardier isn't glowing yet. But a day is well. Thanks to Toronto's generosity, the company is in a roll. ■

The future of the 'coaster: it's terrifying

BY RICHARD BRIDGMAN • It looks scary, but could be the future of the roller coaster. Imagine if instead of sitting in a swayed car, you sit in a roller coaster car that's a roller coaster car. The car is built to the car, so that as the roller coaster speeds over hills and troughs, it will go up and down.



NOT FOR WIMPS: a robotic arm on each car whips you around

side and upside down. Screaming wild and sound coming from the structure: you're not just a roller coaster, you're a roller coaster.

It's called the *Roller coaster*, and it's the only one that's been built. The only one that's been built. The only one that's been built.

It will be the theme park's first roller coaster, the coaster that's been built. The only one that's been built. The only one that's been built.

In looking for the ride will find buyers because of its reputation as a roller coaster. It's a roller coaster. It's a roller coaster.

David Haffley, vice president of *Dynasty* Studios, says he expects a profit of several million dollars in the first year of production, thanks to new roller coaster parks with North American theme parks, plus he has deals to open internationally.

If you're an adventurous roller coaster, you're not one of those roller coaster with a theme park roller coaster. ■

HE REFUSES TO DISCUSS LEGACY. 'I DON'T THINK ABOUT HOW I'LL BE REMEMBERED.'

the author of the book *Bill Gates: The Making of a Legend*

Chernow says, "They're not just the foundation's cards. Gates is now a global anti-bulldozer with the likes of Warren Buffett and Bill

One of the foundation's earliest beneficiaries was the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI). Gates gave \$750 million over five years to vaccinate 875 million children against life-threatening diseases like polio, measles and tuberculosis. But when the program was getting off the ground, several countries were skeptical to fund their obligations were rejected because they failed to provide enough data or plans for oversight. Others were surprised when GAVI's initial letter showed up to review paperwork, only to find out that when the vaccination had taken place. Those who were sloppy with the re-



ONTARIO COPS SOOTH SHOCKED ROCKER

Two Ontario Provincial Police recently pulled a car over in the town of Oakville for speeding and then found the driver was rocker David Lee Roth. Behind the steering wheel, Roth was wearing a white shirt and a black jacket. Roth was wearing a white shirt and a black jacket. Roth was wearing a white shirt and a black jacket.

OF THE WEEK



A LOAD OF TROUBLE

A new poll shows the E.R. is health care's 'darkest spot'

BY KATE LUNDA • **Senior** Dornish made her home in the area of Digby, N.S., for over 30 years. But last year, after falling into a coma due to what she calls a medical error, she started thinking about moving back to the U.S. "A nurse practitioner [accidentally] switched my medication," says Dornish, who takes pills for anxiety. After going into another, the 58-year-old was airlifted to Halifax, where she remained in a coma for three days. Although Dornish is now "good as new," this ordeal wasn't her only ongoing experience with the health care system. Her 23-year-old daughter suffered for over a decade from meningitis, but doctors failed to diagnose, only to finally discover she was hypoparathyroid. And her elderly mother, who recently battled cancer, was forced to travel three hours to Halifax every week for treatment (she's now recovered). Dornish opted not to leave Digby. "This is my home," she says. Her feelings for the health care system are less warm. According to her, "it's going down the drain."

By now, such sentiments about the Canadian health care system are familiar. But it turns out they're also far from the norm. A new study from *Angus Reid Strategies* suggests that Canadians are actually pretty happy with the care they're receiving, in fact, the system's biggest issues are among the most satisfied. But there are people who fall through the cracks. A whopping three-quarters of our complaints come from just 12 per cent of the population—a "troubling" result, says pollster Angus Reid. And while Canadians are generally pleased with basic services (like doctor visits), they become increasingly critical of more complex procedures, especially hospital stays and emergency room treatment. "If

you're placed in the right part of the system, everything's good," Reid says. If not, "you're in a lot of trouble."

For most Canadians, "family doctors are the gatekeepers of the system," says Canadian Medical Association president Dr. Brian Day. And while 83 per cent now have a physician, according to the poll, "don't call one if it's who don't," Day notes. Those Canadians who complain the most about health care—dubbed "the dissatisfied" in the study—are likely to have the weakest relationships with their physicians. For them, "insurance with family doctors is disastrous," the study notes. Among the dissatisfied, only nine per cent were happy with their last visit. The over-

ONE IN 10 SAY THEY WERE AFFECTED BY MEDICAL ERROR

age Canadian spends about 20 minutes with his or her doctor, Reid notes. For the dissatisfied, it's less than 15. They see this as directly related to the physician shortage. "Doctors often can't afford to spend enough time with patients," he says.

Yet the "darkest spot" in Canadian health care, according to the Angus Reid report, is the emergency room. Overcrowded and often understaffed, they remain as popular with just about everybody: 43 per cent of Canadians were unhappy with their last visit. In Quebec and British Columbia, it's even worse: over 50 per cent of users were dissatisfied. According

to Dr. Howard O'Brien, director of the St. Lawrence Emergency Centre at Toronto's Mount Sinai Hospital, "one of the main drivers of patient satisfaction is how long they have to wait." And people are certainly waiting at Digby's local hospital, Dornish says, "it can take four or five hours just to see somebody."

The one in 10 Canadians now opting for an aging family member is also underrepresented. Two in five such respondents were dissatisfied with the service; a parent or an in-law received in the E.R. Indeed, older care is a growing concern for all Canadians. Although 17 per cent believe that concern with the health care system improved their relative's health, one in five thinks it actually made people sicker.

For hospitals, overnight stays fared better than the E.R.—during their last stay, 77 per cent of respondents felt satisfied. (Interestingly, rural hospitals proved more popular than urban: 95 per cent of rural Canadians were happy with their last visit, while just 73 per cent of urban dwellers were.) But Day says these results are nevertheless cause for concern, especially because so many Canadians wind up sharing a room during their overnight stay. "It's an unexcused leftover from the Victorian ages ward," he says. "There's no reason for it."

As for medical errors, Dornish is far from alone in believing she's suffered as a result of one. In the study, one in 10 Canadians reported being affected within the last year (the two most commonly cited mistakes are being misdiagnosed or prescribed the wrong medication).

Although demographically no different from other Canadians, the dissatisfied group—that small portion who complain three-quarters of all complaints—were more likely to believe they've suffered almost one-quarter say they've been the victim of medical error within the past year. These people aren't just complainers, Reid emphasizes. "They're genuinely having problems."

While Day believes some of these findings—especially those concerning E.R. and hospital visits—are cause for concern, there is good news: the fact that most of us are satisfied with the care we receive means we don't have to throw out the baby with the bathwater. "There are people who [think] the entire system isn't working," Reid says. That's not true. We don't have to start over. ■



WHY WATERMELONS MAKE FOR BETTER LOVERS
Want Viagra without the expense of a prescription? Science has found that watermelon contains citrulline, which converts with the body's enzymes to relax blood vessels and enable erections. It takes just six slices of watermelon to mimic the effect of Viagra, claims Shihua Pei at the Fruit and Vegetable Improvement Center at Texas A&M University. "Watermelon may not be as ergogenic as Viagra, but it's a great way to relax blood vessels."

SOME OF THE WORLD'S BEST WRITERS. IN ONE COLUMN.



ANDREW COYNE



PAUL WELLS



SCOTT FESCHUK



MARK STEYN



BARBARA AMIEL

BRINGING CONTEXT, INSIGHT AND CLARITY TO NEWS CLUTTER.

MACLEAN'S
MAKE SENSE OF IT ALL

while the inquisitors ones did not understand at all." Lee said the process was called "brutish reasoning" and that it skirted to eliminating strong competitors in early rounds so that Koreana could face relatively weaker opponents in the final rounds.

At the time, Korean prospects were trying to take over parts of Olympic tea house do, manipulating electrons to the executive and making in millions in kickbacks and bribes. A journalist once asked Lee Chong-woo about gang members in the sport. Lee replied that prospects grew too loose to do bad crime but they were avoided to control groups trying to wreck the martial art, an indirect reference to the Cold War between his WTT organization and the Communist-backed ITF.

The links to crime bosses don't seem to have held. Earlier this year, Korean tea house do master, Lee Sang-Hwan, announced that he was a director of the Seoul-based Kukliwon (the premier training facility and world headquarters of Olympic tea house do), even though a South Korean court had imprisoned him for working with 300 gangsters and martial artists during street fights before a two-hour do presidential election in 2002.

Almost as bad were the bribery, extortion and corruption scandals that eventually destroyed Kim Un-yeong. In 2005, a Korean court found him guilty of embezzling more than \$1 million from sports organizations and of accepting more than \$700,000 in bribes. He was sentenced to two years in prison. Kim said the whole thing was a political vendetta, but didn't offer details. Later naturally, Olympic tea house do found the same crime in its history as, country by country, Kim's network fell. The IOC considered it a disgrace to have a leader of the Olympic tea, but it remained fairly behind the WTT itself, itself from the ground up—in Canada, the U.S., Australia and many other nations.

"We've moved into a business age," said Wayne Mitchell, Canada's WTT secretary general, referring to the WTT website. "It's the answer to run those organizations like businesses rather than like criminal organizations or as extensions of that sort of thing." Grandmaster Choi He, Canada's head coach of the 2004 Olympic team, said that the refereeing and judging should be more consistent for the 2008 games, thanks to judging seminars and other WTT seminars.

Korean Seung-ho hopes the worst is over. He doesn't want to discuss corruption in Olympic tea house do. "It's a waste of energy," she says. He has other things to focus on, like winning a gold medal. ■

Also Gaili's Killing Art: The Unsettled History of The Korean Do, will be published by BCP Press in August 2007.



A RASH OF INCIDENTS HAS SPURRED MEDICAL EXPERTS TO CALL FOR SAFETY DESIGN GUIDELINES

KILLER NAILS

Horrific nail gun injuries hit pros and handymen alike

BY ANDREW HICKMOTH • The whole paper can be traced into the construction worker's chest, rising and falling as he lay on the hospital emergency room table, fully conscious. Bleeding down at him was Dr. M.C. (Marty) Myers, a heart surgeon at Stanford Health Sciences Center—University Hospital, in western Ontario. Under the flimsy cap, Myers quickly found the reason for the man's heart-attack: a 30-cent-long steel nail embedded deep in his chest.

Earlier that day, the carpenter had accidentally blasted the metal projectile into his own heart while he framed a two-story house using an automatic, air-powered nail gun. Had he watched the nail out, he'd have been told to death, instead, the metal had become a plug in his perforated heart and had saved him—at least for now.

Myers' team put the 27-year-old worker under general anesthesia (the comatose-like state for private recovery), and rushed him into surgery. They removed the large nail from the right side of his heart and repaired the tears. He survived, and checked out of hospital four days later, but the case left Myers troubled about his patient's care and the growing number and severity of nail-gun injuries.

That concern soon became a call for action. In a recent paper in *The Canadian Journal of Surgery*, Myers and partner Dr. L. Ray Guo reported the case and advised nail-gun makers to modify the engineering and design of their tools' firing systems. A simple change, the doctors claimed, could stop marauders from blasting nails into heads, hands, thighs, eyes and even skulls.

Most nail-gun accidents as what is called "contact mode." When someone drops the trigger, the tool fires even if the user or "power user" (often contact with the wood). Increasingly, the tools are firing even when the nail gun bumps or makes inadvertent contact with a surface—often body or that of a co-worker—especially if they are carrying it around by the trigger, a common practice but one that's not recommended. In their study, Myers and Guo and colleagues found that nail guns are so powerful they qualify as low-velocity missiles. "They are potentially lethal weapons, for use, in untrained and untrained hands," Myers said. Modern's

Statistics Canada has no national statistics on injury statistics, but some provinces have started keeping track. In British Columbia, for example, 241 workers in the housing construction sector alone reported being struck by nail guns between 2003 and 2005. The average injury kept a carpenter out of work for 17 days, and the average claim to the province's occupational health sys-

tem was \$13,376, for a total bill of \$764,543.

The numbers in the U.S. are even more startling. Designed by the U.S. Product Safety Commission, based on 42,000 people a year show up at hospital emergency departments with nail-gun injuries—more than 100 a day. Even more are treated at day clinics. Treating the wounds costs at least US\$140 million a year as emergency medical care, rehabilitation and workers' compensation, the commission found. The U.S. has also seen some horrific fatalities.

In 2007, Mike construction worker Deon Holmes, 26, was killed instantly after tripping, handling backwoods and accidentally firing a large nail gun into his brain stem while he had gun.

• Labourer Juan Delgado, then 41, shot himself in the head in July 2005, two hours after leaving a job at a construction site. He died in hospital five days later, leaving behind a wife and three children in Coahuila, Mexico.

• A 2006 accidental nail-gun shooting in remote northern California killed handyman Manuel Morán, 36. He shot a two-inch firing nail into his heart while working in a cabin in the Sierra Nevada mountains.

• In 2004, Raymond Bissimier, 23, of Plymouth, Mass., died from a nail-gun blast to his heart while working on a home renovation project.

Such incidents show that the tools can be deadly, not only for unassuming do-it-yourselfers, but for professional and experienced building professionals.

In 2006, news caught a Glendale, Va., resident of Toronto, then 20, was accidentally shot in the right side of the head by a 30-year-old who was operating a nail gun while they were building a house in Toronto. Vlaschuk was placing sheets of plywood and gluing them to floor joists when he was hit by a nail-fired nail. A crew leader pulled the 26-year-old out after the shot. Vlaschuk said, "I kind of passed out when he did it," he said.

News writer called ambulance or police, but somebody—his cousin remember who dropped him off in an emergency room while his crew worked. Vlaschuk's injuries, like many who experience such injuries and too many more, killed to report his trip to Ontario authorities.

After Ontario Ministry of Labour investigators found out about his trip, the builder and developer, Lucky Casper and General's Design (Lucky Ltd.), were cited charged with breaching the Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act's section reporting rules. On Dec. 1, 2005, the company pleaded guilty and was fined

\$10,000 and \$15,000 respectively.

Vlaschuk suffered permanent damage to his peripheral vision, and five years later continues to suffer from ongoing headaches and memory loss, a sleep disorder that makes him sleep occasionally between 10 and 12 hours a day. He's now taking courses to improve his English. "They said it's usually for me to return to work and want me to do something else," he says.

But nail guns can be dangerous even for those not on a work site. They are an estimate of 250 respondents are injured in the U.S. by nails that miss targets and stray into streets or adjacent properties. In May 2007, California highway patrol officer Ronald Harris Jr. was driving home from the gym where he was in the eye by a nail blasted by a carpenter working on a new house 75 feet away, on the



IN THE U.S., 42,000 people a year turn up in emergency rooms with nail-gun injuries

other side of a four-lane Riverside County road. The nail sailed through his open eye window and landed him sideways into the passenger seat of his car, leaving him dazed and, after he was rushed to hospital, with a permanently damaged eye.

Investigation often call nail-gun injuries "leak accidents." Manufacturers such as Hitachi, Skanli, Fastech and Senco insist their tools are safe, and say most injuries are due to workers' misreading them—specifically, carrying them around with their fingers on the trigger. But Mark Elm, a home inspector in St. Louis, says it's an accident that works on carpenters that work. The weight and control of the tools make that the only way

to carry them comfortably.

Both Elm and Hester Lipscomb, a 40-year-old epidemiologist from Duke University in North Carolina who has also studied the issue, say a safer trigger would prevent most injuries. Some nail guns come with "legendary triggers," which require three steps to first place the nose on the object to be nailed and then pull the trigger, repeating those steps each time, without requiring that the gun firing when it's accidentally bumped. Lipscomb's research has found that better-designed two-step triggers would not harm but would have the gun activated had a negligent trigger.

As a construction safety consultant in St. John's, Nfld., earlier this year, Lipscomb urged safety officials in Canada and the U.S. to lead the nation's trigger under the "gun-



and duty" of their respective occupational health and safety laws. Such studies indicate that employers have a duty to provide a workplace free of known hazards that may cause death or serious injury. Myers and Guo from the London Health Sciences Centre say it's nice that building construction professionals and weekend handymen get more and better training when they buy or rent nail guns. Until safer trigger systems are adopted, one fellow of the Canadian Medical Association journal, Eric Woolton, has already suggested Canada to lead the tools and their rails looked up "in they would any firearm and ammunition." ■

With Michael Prosser



MOTHER DOESN'T STOP JUNIOR CRIME FIGHTER
A 10-year-old South Carolina boy has an interest in crime prevention but was told in his school's bulletin that he stole a picture out of a self-appointed patrol—before. After his patrol through the town of Olin, he stopped off at home 30 minutes his mother, who was so impressed the didn't bother to alert the police. He's been charged with larceny and burglary and she's down for contributing to the delinquency of a minor.

HEY, KIDS— TIME TO POTTY!

In only five hours, the Potty Whisperer can train almost any child

BY SUSAN MOHAMMAD • Some call her Superwoman. Others jokingly refer to her as the Potty Nazi. But after toilet training over 300 toddlers at the "hoity camp" she runs out of her kitchen in the suburbs of Chicago, Wendy Sweney is known in many parenting circles as, simply, the Potty Whisperer.

Sweney's "camp"—which, like *Clatsco*, has a 98 per cent success rate—consists of a five-hour session, and costs US\$350. When students first enter her home, they are told to put on underwear and trim their diapers. "We don't need those anymore," she declares. Children are each assigned their own potty seat. Then, Sweney offers them a range of snacks to eat while they run around and play—like *Chex*, *M&M's* and pop. "It's not a diet I would normally recommend," says Sweney, who is a part-time nurse at a pediatric hospital and a mother of five. The kids start to draw water into the bowl, she says, while the sugar soaks in, which doesn't quench their thirst, ensure that kids will drink plenty.

During the session, students are repeatedly instructed: "If you need to go, go in the potty." Parents are home, but they're expected to stay quiet—a wrenching experience for some, considering this is a class in which kids are expected to clean up their own poop if they don't do as they're told. But the goal, she says, is to transfer responsibility for the toddler's body from parent to child.

These days, Sweney's classes are filling up like sassy diapers. "I have people flying in from all over the country, from California, New York and Florida," she says. She is even fielding calls from Canadian parents seeking advice. Her philosophy is based on Nathan Aspin's book *Toilet Training in Less Than a Day*. Children must be 2½ years old in order to be admitted into the camp—any younger, she says, and they usually can't grasp what she's teaching. "When we reward or scold, we always focus on the behaviour, not the

child," says Sweney of her approach. She builds up self-esteem with praise and encouragement, and rewards kids with treats for following instructions.

The experience of "listening to your body" is repeated like a mantra. "I think accidents are good because that's how we learn," she says, adding the advice works through screaming, biting or crying tantrums that may last up to 45 minutes after a sugar crash. Most of the tantrums are waged by children who have been asked to clean up the business they've left on the kitchen floor, she says, and who are used to their parents simply doing it for them. "I tell them the accident happened because they didn't listen to their body," she says. "This way, we are teaching them to be responsible for themselves."

Sweney says that if parents don't train their children with treats, could lead them to make improper associations, and cause them to expect them from their parents. She also expects defying out treats and a nibble for using the potty with "cooperative pooping." She suggests toilet training should be a more relaxed and private process, done in one's own home.

Sweney is not surprised, however, that a service like this would be popular. "Parents want their child to be trained by someone else in a short space of time because we are so busy," she says, "and we feel we have to get parenting right." Also, parents may hire an "expert" because they feel ill-equipped to deal with the process, since knowledge was traditionally passed down by other parents within a community.



SCHOOL FOR WEE CARE: Wendy Sweney (right) runs "hoity camp" out of her kitchen.

Most parents arrive skeptical, Sweney says, but leave ascertains of how to set toilet expectations. Still, not everyone agrees with the idea of outsourcing parental duties. "Sounds like someone is taking it as the current theory to be a perfect parent," says Linda Cameron, an early childhood development expert who works at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. While Cameron says she would like to know more about Sweney's methods, she feels awkward about

in addition to hoity camp, Sweney's website offers phone consultations and "private potty parties" where a child can learn with four other kids (weekend US\$1,250). Despite what critics think, and occasionally being squirmed with pop, Sweney says she doesn't believe the kids know she makes a potshot at her. "At the end of the day, parents thank me and the kids come to me saying they still like me. If I was just cashing in for the money, I'd charge more—because I'm exhausted!" ■



AUSTRALIA: FUNERAL SONGS NEEDN'T BE DEADLY
Funeral directors in Adelaide report that the festive-sounding hits of local parents are increasingly chosen rock songs such as AC/DC's "Highway to Hell." "Some of the more unusual songs we hear work well because they represent the person's character," says funeral director Bryan Elliott. Other local hits of popular and less conventional choices, including "Ding Dong! The Witch is Dead," "Another Day Another Dollar" and "Shirley Is My Hero."

PHOTO: MICHAEL GOODMAN FOR SHUTTERSTOCK; 50,000



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MATT WARD,
Adam West in
the TV series
(left) Batman
The Dark Knight

HOLY IDENTITY CRISIS, BATMAN!

Dark Batman isn't any more 'authentic' than crazy, silly Batman BY JAIMIE J. WEINMAN

film

Which version of Batman is the real, authentic one? Is it the dark, depressed treatment in movies like the upcoming *Batman: The Dark Knight* (opening July 18), in which the Joker is a terrifying, serial killer and Batman is played by self-doubt? Or is the Batman who fought crime with a teenage boy in green underwear, got turned into a baby, promptly declared himself to be "Bat-baby" and fought villains like Catwoman and King Tut? There's not much doubt which Batman is in fashion these days: Dark Knight, from the British team of writer-director Christopher Nolan and actor Christian Bale, is being aggressively marketed by Warner Brothers as even darker than the comic book's Batman before. Don the tragic death of Heath Ledger, whose role as the Joker in this movie turned out to be his last, seems to fit in with Nolan's darkly haunted comic-book world. As a no-no, Warner Brothers is releasing the sequel, *Batman Returns*, inspired by the violence, and the Batman comic books are doing a round of stories about serial killers and spies like "Batman, R.I.P." What we're not seeing in the fun, happy, kid-friendly tale on the character, the version some fans consider the "real" Batman. At least, we're not seeing it now; that will change. It always does.

When a new Batman movie comes out, it's common to hear not only that Batman can be dark and serious, but that he should be. Christian Bale, who plays Batman as a socially vigilant whose tendency against crime may result in much trouble at it, seems that he was rewarded by employing that Batman might be responsible for the success of the Joker, a role of the comic that has been the most in the true one. "I think that that was what Bob Kane intended when he first created the character." But saying that Batman was once upon a time like saying that Charlie Brown was intended to be happy-go-lucky, he started that way, but it didn't last.

The original Batman comics from the years

1939 and 1940, created by writer Bob Kane and writer Bill Finger, were certainly more violent than your average Superman comic, but the concept was heavily influenced by Dick Tracy—the original square-jawed crime fighter with a rogues' gallery of grotesque villains. But the origin story of the character always had a bit of whimsy to it. Lest we forget, the lead writer for the '60s Batman TV series, recalls that when he looked at the original comics, he thought the premise was kind of crazy. "It said he became a crime fighter when his parents were murdered by criminals. And it also said that it was a well-known fact that criminals are terrified of him, and then here he decided to take the form of a bat. That's the dumbest thing I found it deliciously absurd."

In any event, the dark-billed violence of the early comic didn't last long; Batman was quickly cleaned up and lightened up, appropriate for what were all American readers in 1941, the New York Times crowd the three-year-old Batman was one of the favorite reading materials of householders. Debbagha Batman sales took off, and editing a tale to Hollywood for a series of 13 episodes after the creators stopped getting money from the weekly violence and gave him a kid sidekick, Robin, to make Batman a better role model for kids. Batman became a do-mesticated father figure, fought villains like the Penguin (who's



ing than a short man with a top hat), and stored in memory that way, while often recalled, rarely lightened.

By the late '50s, when Batman was one of the few superhero characters to survive a government crackdown on comics, he was living in a comic-book science-fiction world that Christopher Nolan would scoff at. Scott Shaw, a cartoonist and comic-book expert who runs the *addictiveworld* website, explains that the version of Batman he grew up watching the one "with Batman and Robin fighting more enemies and alien than concerned villains. Since I already loved movies with monsters and aliens, that was fine with me." The *Zebra* *Batman*? "The *Robot Batman*? The *Rainbow Batman*? ... I couldn't get enough of 'em." For anyone who grew up in that era, the true, sophisticated Batman was the one who pilled around with Superman and saw the Joker as Christmas card material. "As young as I am today, with fellow crooks hobnobbing, except the season's greetings go from Batman and Robin."



Criminals are known to be terrified of bats? 'I found the backstory deliciously absurd.'



BATMAN: The Animated Series, 1992-95 (left); (below) Wallace's Greatest Wagon

so, very sophisticated people, and we said this was going to be a crazy comedy." The comic inspired a backlash among fans who didn't appreciate Sample's mockery, but it accomplished something that allowed the Batman character to survive and grow: the comic, postmodern humor made him an icon for adults, not just kids.

Ever since that time, there have been dozens of adaptations as Batman, inspired both by the dark '70s comic and Sample's comic version. The '90s was the golden age of dark,

stylized Batman adaptations. Frank Miller's *The Dark Knight Returns* and Tim Burton's first *Batman* movie, but the '90s brought a new round of high-wattage Batman adaptations in the '90s invasion, like the movie *Batman and Robin*, in which George Clooney played the hero as a grieving idiot who will do the vile like Mr. Freeze. "Oh, Freeze. I'm Batman."

For their part, dedicated comic book fans would rather see Batman as a brooding vigilante. "I think overall, as professionals, we prefer the more serious version of the character," Wein says, "because it was more interesting to write."

But there's also a version of Batman for people who notice that Batman is the most misanthropic of all the major superheroes: he's a guy with no powers who thinks he's a superhero because he wears a mask and has a lot of expensive toys. Artists, writers and directors can pick and choose which elements of Batman they prefer at any given time. *Batman Begins* and *The Dark Knight* may be the product of a backlash against how silly the character became in the '90s, but that doesn't mean the *Batman* character will stop evolving. Batman in 2005 is very different from the Batman in 1992, who was wearing a suit with plastic nipples, and that's no reason to expect there won't be another new approach a few years from now.

That's what great literature does: it doesn't have to be one of the few comic book characters who keep changing. Spider-Man and even Superman have to be more or less the same character all the time, but ever since the moment when the comic was revealed to add Robin, Batman has been open to every possible interpretation. The cartoon *Batman: The Animated Series* showed a group of children arguing over what Batman is like, and compares him to the goody version, with Spring-style armor, another presents the older, ultra-violent *Batman* of Frank Miller. At the end of the episode, they encounter the version of Batman portrayed in the animated series. "I think the audience accepts whatever it goes at the time," Wein says. "They really don't have much of a choice."



WE'RE STALKING... CHRISTIE BRINKLEY
Despite the degradation of milking her broken marriage to Peter Cookin a divorce trial last week, the former supermodel managed to hold her head high's case as part of her life: her career on the screen. When Cook's lawyer suggested that her court testimony was more entertaining, Brinkley said, "I'm not Marylin Streep, but I've been in a very successful movie," referring to 1983's *White Lightning*. "I've been in a very successful movie. I've got to go."

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"IF I HAD A dollar for every time somebody told me they wanted one," says society doyenne Catherine Nugent, "it would be wonderful."

Would you put \$8,000 on the floor?

Purse books keep that Ferragamo bag away from thieves and some very nasty microbes

BY ANNE KINGTON • Now that women have the freedom to address the most obvious to female consumption—the system discrimination that forces them to hang thousands of dollars' worth of designer from a sheer back or, worse, have their legs gawping on the floor vulnerable to thieves, lifts, scuffing, and nasty microbes.

It's not just the newly rediscovered great purse books, a genre that hangs from cable tops and runs from \$1 to upwards of \$100. It's the new female equalizer, used by women of all ages everywhere from the dining room of the luxurious Gros Hotel Bon (John in Millers to North Bay Kings) to the

The books have been around since the 1930s, when handbags emerged as a symbol of the unconnected woman. Queen Elizabeth is said to employ an S-shaped one to hang her handbags, the contents of which remain a perplexing mystery. But only recently, as the current one obviously featured in "It" bags, has the logic of the book gained traction.

"I like mine everywhere," says Toronto society doyenne Catherine Nugent, "and if I had a dollar for every time somebody told me they wanted one, it would be wonderful." Her silver book was a gift from a friend in Brazil, where girls grow up with the up and down of the purse as a way of saying if you put your name on the floor, "It's Brazil, though."

It's true, Nugent says. "People will come along and steal your purse," in France, her comments precede a warning, Nugent is also worriedly, a cat dilly-bag she finds being her best bet to her "It" bags using a separate chain which most women do.

Robert Gage, the packish Toronto hair dresser whose advice provides robes and books for clients' handbags, views damp purses

on the ground as a Canuck fable. "Canadian women are notorious for putting their bags on the floor," he says. He knows the morphology of purse-microbes. "It all started with those huge bags with the link feet on the bottom," he says.

Once grounded, that can Coach bag be a very nice microbe, in anyone who has watched Oprah know. The purse comes back on purrs is seeking, literally, would, year, a platform of them inducing bacteria, and plenty of 6 mile Public bathrooms are gawping, says Nugent. "You know the girls have been designed by men," she says.

The names for purse designers have crossed an international border. Kim Moody and Kelly Allen of Calgary use the phrase and two years ago started up Hook Hirs ("Canada's largest, longest, premier purse book") inspired from the U.S. "There's huge interest," says Moody of the \$10 to \$45 link, which may soon be sold on Oprah's website. She reports they even can get in handy on the speed-dialling device when people migrate from table to table. "If a couple has nothing to talk about, it can be an conversation," she says.

Belo, a Brazilian fashionista in a 1980s period, has sold more than 1,000 of its \$100 period with a mirrored top and ribboned underside, says one on cover. *Barley Oca*

mpo. "Women buy one, then they come back to buy for friends," he says. "It's an one on the spot in front of them as those dresses to hang long. 'Look! I can't find it in a minute,' he says. "Most women have an idea."

The purse bags, books are discussed with meaning and in a style. "It's a book on a luxury book cover about a 1980s 'celebrity' model made from recycled gold. 'I love this product! I receive a compliment whenever I use it. I have already stocked up and am giving them in gifts and everyone loves it!' The title of a posting on another book sounds like Barbie's M.O. think "The Pure Book: Necessary or Redundant?"

The answer is obvious. That, books work with the ladylike purse favored by the Queens, big bags with long shoulder straps will end up back on the shelf. And they do add to the amount of women's purse books around. But more ridiculous are business cards that women not providing the in Toyota has changed, and has a "pure book" among accessories offered in 2004. Corolla in Spain, restaurants and hotels improve them in a branding exercise, says Maria Perez, a manager at the Green Hotel San Julia. Nugent reports Toronto's Four Seasons Hotel has considered offering them in its Studio Club. Maybe one day managers and sellers will have of providing purse books as they do wheelchair accessibility.

Until then, it seems the women still have to do it for themselves. ■



WHAT THEY GOT FOR IT 'BACKSTAGE! STASH'
Wendy Wilson, who spent 32 years as a page to the late Queen Mother, died last year and now his stash of royal memorabilia and gifts is up for auction. Items range from an 18th century gold-and-silver box to a letter from the Queen Mother to the page, nicknamed "Backstage Billy," in which she, "I will take two small bottles of Colman's and give with the wine. It's a treat. It is needed." The collection fetched about \$100,000.

arts



DAVID FRANKLIN, chief curator of the National Gallery of Canada, with a sketch by Barabara artist Jacopo da Pontormo

Intrigue at the National Gallery

An out-of-the-blue announcement that the chief curator is on leave has people talking

BY JOHN GEDDIS • As one of the world's leading experts on Italian art history, David Franklin knows plenty about his hierarchy, status, and influence. He has explored how his patronage the Renaissance gained power at the expense of innovative artists. He's amazed by how far back, the great baroque sculptor, emerged to be viewed as an equal by the popes whose faces he captured with uncanny likeness in marble. Asymmetrical, he's fascinated with writing and holding statues, especially where institutional power and art intersect—what he's seeing as hardly these days. The National Gallery of Canada's chief curator since 2002, Franklin finds his own position suddenly the subject of speculation around the primary Canadian gallery scene, not to mention fodder for bloggers on the international fine-art grapevine.

His future was thrown into doubt when a recent email to gallery staff announced, with no explanation, that he is on leave. Franklin wouldn't comment this week on his sudden absence. As for the gallery, its public affairs director, Joanne Chastain, offered only, "All I can say is that he's on leave." As chief curator, Franklin largely decided what hangs on the gallery's walls. Uncertainty about his next move opens up the prospect of wholesale leadership change at the glass and granite art showcase, a popular local destination that boasts a spectacular view of Parliament Hill, and \$51 million a year in federal funding. Already, an top administrator, director Pierre Théberge, is slated to retire at the end of this year, and the hunt for his successor will under way.

Franklin's fate will depend on how he gets along with the new boss. Although senior gallery officials told Maclean's they were

in the dark about his situation, one insider on his relationship with Théberge is assumed to be a former Deputy arts minister between Franklin and the current leadership, however, an abrupt cut to his name is highly unlikely. He has several ambitious projects on the go, and success familiar with the gallery's place said there is no talk of jeopardizing them. His new position as an expert has allowed Franklin to cut deals to borrow key works from major European and American museums, and mount joint shows—delicate negotiations usually struck years in advance and based on personal contacts.

His top priority is a major summer 2009 show on the Renaissance in Rome, featuring artist like Raphael. The exhibition will be a sequel to his first big splash as chief curator, 1666's Caravaggio in Rome, Michelangelo and the Renaissance in Florence. It was the Florence show that caught the eye of curators at Los Angeles's Paul Getty Museum, leading them to partner with the National Gallery on a Baroque sculpture show, slated to open next month at the prestigious Getty, before moving to Ottawa for a fall and winter run.

The next big Franklin show, a 2011 retrospective on Caravaggio, could be a crowd pleaser, given the artist's poster ready to play with shadow and light. A planned 2014 Van Gogh show, which is being pulled together

by another curator recruited by Franklin, has even greater curatorial spending potential.

Up to now though, Franklin hasn't mostly come across as a populist. His Florence show, for instance, asked gallery goers to not about a roster of lesser artists who emerged after Leonardo and Michelangelo. For his Rome Follow-up, he proposes a tour through papal art buying habits of the 1600s. "We'll go from page to page," he said, "and associate, in each room, the mood of each page, some glorious and obsessed by art, and then the ones in the inquisition mode putting darker and more grim."

Intriguing, maybe, but it doesn't exactly scream likelihood. "The gallery doesn't art," observes Alan Todd, the gallery's recently retired long-time chief of staff, "does not attract new customers." Todd says Franklin's "programming is the subject of some debate." Yet Franklin doesn't count off in on clock. Long before he broke into the art world, he grew up at Oxford in the late 1960s, he grew up as a hockey player kid in suburban Toronto. His manner remains most low-key that highbrow. Gallery workers would love to bring the kid in his daughter when they were on strike a few years ago.

For now, Franklin is hunkered down in his house in Ottawa's Lady Grey neighbourhood, writing his Rome show's catalogue. Beyond that, his prospects depend on the machine room he knows have things decided who runs or falls in the world of art. ■



NOW SHOWING—GRASS PHOTOGRAPHY

Artwork installed during the recent 19th-century-themed exhibit was a native in the west, a history by Heather Alexander and Dan Harvey displayed the photographic images of three tournament participants grown on grass. By projecting photo images on photos of seedling grass, the artists created images, with light and dark seeds growing in different rates, producing surprisingly vivid detail.



THE CHARACTERS are often racist, sexist, homophobic and immature. They are enthralled with the idea that they're cold-blooded killers.

Oh, what a lovely mess of a war

The new show from 'The Wire' creators is as original as their last, and as uncompromising

BY THEE MARCH *It's late winter in 2001 and the U.S. Marines' First Recon Battalion is waiting impatiently in the Kuwaiti desert. Any day now, they'll be the first ground troops to pour across the border into Iraq, but all eyes still haven't got a clear explanation of their orders, or the troops they'll need for the invasion. The platoon leaders are knowingly frustrated with the lack of basic supplies—not enough batteries for the night-vision gear, no armor on the Humvees, and the chemical warfare suits are faster given camouflage instead of desert khaki. The troops, meanwhile, are preoccupied more with a rumor that back home, Jennifer Lopez is dead. Some suspect the brass is keeping quiet the news of L.A.'s dilemma, for fear it'll pan morale.*

Just 25 minutes into the first episode of the new HBO miniseries *Generation Kill* (premiering this Sunday at 9 p.m. on The Movie Network and 8 p.m. on Movie Central in Western Canada) you realize this is not a war story. It's a portrait of an invasion that only half-writes, and that's no accident. Executive producers and writers David Simon and Ed Burns spent five seasons exploring similar characters in their last project, the brilliant HBO series *The Wire*, which chronicled the lives of Baltimore's drug dealers, the detectives pursuing them and the city they all call home.

Burns may be uniquely qualified to tell these kinds of stories. A Vietnam vet, he spent 10 years with the Baltimore police, much of it as a homicide detective (hence his contribution to *The Wire*). Later, he worked as an inner-city elementary school teacher—as experience almost as harrowing as his previous jobs, and one that was also characterized by demanding effort: in *The Wire* suffice to say, Burns knows how miserable it

"Any institution by the nature of its institutional structure is a little dysfunctional," he says in an interview with *Harvard Business Review*. "Each person looks through his different window, and those views can conflict. When you're in it, it's Harvard, that's your world. When you're an alumnus, the platoon is your world. When you're a captain, the company is your world. And as your world expands, different success come into play. For the guys on the ground, they don't see those issues. When they rise, some of those issues come upon them, which is a Harvard's downfall." *—J.C.*

Like their previous work, *Simon and Darnay* Generation Kill manages to be far more on target and heartrending than their previous movies, but it's not easy going. You'll find none of the familiar war film archetypes—no baby-faced farm boys yearning to go home and marry his sweetheart, no grunted sergeants playing war father figure to his platoon. In part that's because the movie is based on the acclaimed book by British Stone writer Evan Wright, who was embedded with the First Recon for two months during the war. That's also true to be fair that Simon and Darnay are genetically incapable of pandering to a mass audience. The characters inhabiting this world are the real deal. You may not like

are often more, not less, homophobic, homophobic

ACCORDING TO
"Barack Obama en-
together in Unity,
Unity to Tolerate, it
and then Crazy Ha-

"Arnold Schwar-
a very awkward
McCain's hand

ant and immature. Living on Pop Tarts and peas, the groves are utterly enthralled with the idea that they are cold-blooded killers playing a live-action video game. For many, their greatest fear is that the war will be over before they get to kill again.

The language is, indeed, profound, and is related with military purpose you often have a soldier exactly when the characters are dying. But you get the idea. It's all part of the flying-saucer world experience that Burns and Simon sought to recreate. "We saw for the masses an art that would appeal to the masses and try to get all the details right," he says. "We wrote you leaping forward into the punches that are coming off the screen. Macdonald understood the language, and things are there. There's no exposition, nobody's saying 'that's a grenade launcher on top of our Humvee.' What we perceive is that we're taking you down dead alley, but there it is. We're opening it up with a bang so you're not getting bored. I think that makes for a good movie. It's a good thing because it lives on from saying anything about it. It's like, we don't own a f---ing movie."

That approach pretty much guarantees that Generation Kill won't be for everybody. But those who manage to hold on for the ride—somewhere out there, creaking above these deeply flawed boys and the broken machine they're a part of—And they will end up with something more powerful than understanding, not just that the Iraq campaign was misguided but why it was doomed from the start. ■



HELLO HELL-LIT: Night's rocks for film stars like Antonio Banderas, right; his rival Thai-style lounge goes lobster soon served in a coconut

Canada's most famous Thai chef

Sasi Meechai-Lim offers cooking classes but keeps the secret to her enticing flavours in a jar

BY ANNE MICHELEN • Demand for the purest version of the chef's Thai *Moo-chie-lam* is so passionately shared that it is not unusual for chefs to board a private plane from Thane to Bangkok, in order to avoid the snare rich guys would only ever see arriving for paid Thai. She was once summoned to a film shoot at her native Thailand—because no-one would do. There are stories of a dream entrepreneur in distant Dubai, and her husband and business partner, Allan Lim, says that the Toronto Rita Carlton, scheduled to open in 2005, is planning her life. All that is to say that she is without a doubt the most famous Thai chef in the country—and come to think of it, the only one that you are likely to have ever heard of at all.

Merga Gourmont: This is the newest and most appealing of the three restaurants she has opened in Toronto. It is situated on the eastern end of the downtown core where most of the local film industry is centred. This may help explain why—according to Lum—she was hired to do private dinners for Jackie Chan and Antonio Banderas, among others. And how it was that the freshling bossess also came to find herself perched with the chef on the roof of the historic exterior brochure.

Chief Metchie-Linn also gives popular cooking classes. And this is why, on a recent afternoon in June, I find myself standing alone with a few friends in the smoking stodge stretched to their mean limits, sweating kitchen staff load a work table with trays of the greasy and measured ingredients mandated for inclusion in the dishes we are to be taught.

the rice cooked and chopped, and so on. These corporate cooking classes are really about cooking by numbers. But nonetheless it is soon evident that I do not rise according to the Mouchar-Lara standard. She takes care of the mixing spoons and finishes the job herself.

A taste of the solid democrats why she has a reputation that stretches apart. For while you may find a similar solid on offer at your local Thai takeout, it is very unlikely to be found jacking anything near the same 20 ingredients. They make for a slowly building ramble of fragrant spiciness that combines sweetness and heat in a manner most satisfying—and leaves you wanting more.

That we get, for we are not turned loose on the crossop to assemble a small array of hot drives. Making pad. This is precisely as simple as you would think, but improved method comes down to little more than better ingredients, and a trick of scooping her noodle in warm water instead of boiling them, so that they do not turn to mush in the meat pan.

Her lemon grass and chicken soup is easily the tender anyone present can remember sampling. This is directly not attributable to her chicken stock, which looks watery and tasteless; yes, too. But once her special soup jumps a solid to the criss, things change.

The stress happens when her primary protein is dissolved in a concave milk to make the space for the endogenous curd-killing systems.

The Michael Levens approach to this case is very lively and occasional sarcasm; for example, she shares the tradition of beginning a carry by seating; types in an olive branch of lighting a cigar directly to the camera; talks like, "I am good! I feel working today she is committed to using the best arguments available at a reasonable cost, and to cooling their anger more gently and a little less than what most of the fellow Thinks might prefer. But the secret to her ratcheting discussions appears to be rooted in her special, five spec moments, where pre-announced she will not demonstrate. She will however still yell a pre- and why not?

"Okay, you stopping and goin' down now, the derivative of f of x is unity, instructs us as we stand about sampling our efforts. She is evidently done for the day with this cooking school business, and while doubtlessly pleased that we are so impressed with what we could accomplish with her ingredients, she does not want to conclude our work with here, or get too run full in search the difference.

We do as we are told. And what follows is indeed very impressive. Lam likes to call his wife "the arms with the golden hands." I might not go quite that far, but I would certainly not mind her putting me up, down, across my hips, and grilling lamb chops with olive sauce (couscous, chili, onion, garlic, tomato and oregano) and some a few other things besides. ■

TODAY'S SPECIAL... WAB-THEMED DINING

In the Lebanese capital of Beirut, where they know a thing or two about war, "Buns & Guns" has opened. The war-themed restaurant features waiters in military fatigues who serve "Saladshevik sandwiches" chosen from bullet-shaped menus. While dining on "terrorist bread," diners are wooed by recorded sounds of explosions. Says owner Youssef Ibrahim, "The moment I opened the restaurant, there was a lot of business."



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ACCORDING TO TV U.S.-STYLE CAMPAIGNING

Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton campaigned for the first time together in Unity, New Hampshire, today. Their tour goes from Unity to Tolaiste, Rhode Island, and Setting on My Knees, Virginia, and then Cross-Make-Up Sex, California. — Jimmy Kimmel

"Arnold Schwarzenegger met John McCain today. And it was a very awkward moment when they shook hands because McCain's hand broke off!"—Craig Ferguson





BARBARA BAYNE and Billie Packard (left) and (left) with four of the cast from *The Latest from Friends for Jesus*

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ROGERS

Babies— tiny, toxic babies— are quietly killing us



SCOTT
PERLE

For too long, we have been
looked in unproductive dis-
course on climate change.
For too long, we have been
debating the extent to which
the race in development of this
planet are responsible for
warming scenes and more
and Mother Nature into a neurological
Amy Winchman

But now comes a voice of reason. Now
comes the Optimum Population Trust, a Brit-
ish group with the courage to confront the
real impact in the fight against global warm-
ing—tiny, little babies.

That's right, babies. Don't be fooled by
their soft skin and angelic demeanor. Once
adjustable babies are developing the earth!
Straight from the womb, infants are an
environmental menace. Almost immediately
they begin to engage in profoundly selfish
and destructive behavior, such as inhaling.
Plus, the Optimum Population Trust has
uncovered shocking evidence that some of
these so-called "babies" eventually grow up
and go on to life to do impossible things
like drink water or eat.

The solution? It's simple: have only two chil-
dren instead of three, they could cut their
family's carbon dioxide output by the equiv-
alent of 100 tons. Right? A year between Lon-
don and New York, the OPT says. "The effect
on the planet of having one child less is an
order of magnitude greater than all these
other things we might do, such as switching
off lights," said the group's spokesman. In
fact, researchers estimate that a person would
have to live the entire life in the dark to make
up for the impact of a single child—and so far
only George W. Bush has demonstrated a
willingness to do that.

I'm not surprised to learn of this alarming
infant threat. I've always been wary of babies,
the producers, the mood swings, the way they
kill all my Christmas.

And now the OPT has demonstrated that the

"desire" of such new baby—as calculated
over the course of his or her lifetime—is roughly
\$60,000. Consider this with the cost of raising
one child: the Trust suggests. Compared
to having a kid, spending a buck on birth con-
trol "represents a spectacular potential return
on investment" (What's that? Goodness
appears in value? Think of the compound
interest earned by that one I kept in my wall
let through five years of high school.)

And play down "the glorification of
sex," possibly by showing Rose (2000) how
it's done.

Statistics may point out that the Optimum
Population Trust's plan to make life on earth
a paradise appears to contain an air of cruelty
of making life on earth a living hell. The group's
char was recently quoted stating for a mas-
sive global recession and bemoaning the
fact that, since way back in the good old days
of worldwide conflict and
chronic disease, humans
have proved themselves
surprisingly resilient.

"Even the great plagues
only caused a sort of hiccup
on the upward movement
of population," Valerie Ste-
vens lamented in a British
webpage. "Even the First
World War, when so many
were killed, didn't really
stop the growth."

You have to admit it's a
crazy disregard for human
sexual group. The Great
Plague—Sethon/Harmony/
Go Girl! R!

As for me, the Optimum
Population Trust is holding
off on recommending
mandatory, such as exact
legislation that would
outlaw having more than
one child and forcing the
rest of life or enough be
brought up on charges of
crimes against humanity
and, just to rights historical



The OPT says TV shows must be ordered to stress the "sheer drudgery" of motherhood

Better than raising taxes, more effective
than mandatory carbon reductions—fight-
ing global warming by hitting the baby
meat is "easier, quicker, cheaper, faster
and greener," the Trust says. Plus it would
totally lose those goddamn Wiggles. And
it would bring about a whole new and
exciting way for men to resist romantic com-
mitment: I would love to impregnate you,
honey, but I have too much respect for Mother
Earth.

So how does the OPT plan to wage its War
on Babies? By urging countries to adopt
population control, a controlling order
of contraceptive and castrating their
men to become Brad Pitt's pit in his pants.
Also, and as all environmentalists, the OPT wants
governments to order their television
audiences to see TV shows and movies to
stress "the frequent sheer drudgery of mother-

hood, plus poor acting. But the Trust remains
adamant that "the decision to have children
should be seen as a very big one" that's life
and death for the polar ice cap.

Hmm, I don't know about that—I've always
loved to believe by world leaders and what
my Houston that children are our future.
And if we don't have a lot of children, then
we don't have much of a future. Plus, who'll
pay for medicine to keep me hooked up to
that Scarsie Johnson's Lap warmer for
my last breath of life?

Maybe we can find a compromise in still
having the same number of children but asking
them to hold their breath during over-
numbered years? Meanwhile, I'll go to a
cavalier to get a move on with the pills. M

ON THE WEB: To read Facebook on the Internet
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VERNON REYNOLD THIESSEN

1969-2008

'He was meticulous. The last thing he wanted was for a vehicle to break down.'

Vernon Reynold Thiesen was born in the prairie town of Winkler, Minn., on Sept. 26, 1969. His father, Corrie C. Thiesen, a lay pastor in the Lutheran Minnesota Church, owned a 1,000-acre grain and hog farm in the nearby village of Schoenewald. His mother, Helen, was a homemaker. Vern was the youngest of the couple's six children. His sister Sylvia, who was still at home when he was growing up, remembers him as a happy little boy who often entertained himself by playing in a sandbox with miniature farm toys. He was a shy child, who at family get-togethers, usually wouldn't talk until most people had left.

"He did better one-on-one," Sylvia says, remembering his humorous cousin Ramona Ems or the big red corral farm dog Blaney. His true passion, almost from the time he could toddle, was fixing machines, starting with tractors and going all the way to cars and trucks. "He could diagnose any problem," Sylvia says. "He was a natural."

School was not an easy task. Like a lot of other rural children, Vern attended a one-room school with Grades 1-6 in one room and Grades 7-8 in the other. His teachers never lasted more than a year and he had "no company," Sylvia says. For the first six years, Vern struggled until the school children were emancipated and he went to a bigger sixth-grade school. "That was the beginning of his education," Corrie says. "From Grades 1 to 6, I had to send him to school, after that I let him go."

By the time Vern attended high school at Garden Valley College, he was mowing some trailing blades, especially in subjects like English. Except for car magazines, "Vern didn't read what," Sylvia says. "He would rather work with his hands." Still, with her help, she says, "He didn't get the greatest marks, but he passed." What really made school interesting for him was the shop program. "Mechanics was his strong suit," Corrie says. "And there were some very good teachers there." When it came to looking under the hood of a car, Corrie adds, Vern excelled. "To me there is a God of cars and what he does you do with them? He had no problems. He was very patient."

But Corrie and Sylvia describe Vern as a particularly sensitive person. As a mere year-old boy he had survived a bad accident, which, his sister says, "changed him." Playing a dangerous game of chase with older boys, Vern jumped off the back of a moving truck

and suffered a concussion. After he recovered, "he withdrew and became even more shy," Sylvia says. And, as he grew older, he became especially caring of what she calls "the quiet ones" in his family's church, in an urban "he reached out to them," she says. "He wanted them to live important."

After high school, Vern went to work for a number of automotive firms around Winkler, maintaining their fleets of machinery. He did his most fulfilling work alone. "Vern always liked being the shop foreman," Corrie says. He wasn't answerable enough and he didn't relish the idea of training junior mechanics to assist with his carefully reconstructed projects. "He was very meticulous," Corrie explains. "The last thing he wanted was for a vehicle to break down, and especially on safety issues, he was very conscientious."

Vern didn't just fix farm trucks; he remodelled them to compete in high-powered truck pulls, and rebuilt muscle cars—built up a Corvair and Dodge Darts—for quarter-mile drag races in Wilmington and Albion, Minn. Many times he also drove them, racing against the clock. It was more than just a demonstration of his expertise, he said. "He liked the thrill of 500 horses. And he had the feel. It was a skill contest more than anything, the stakes weren't terribly high." Only once did Vern compete in a demolition derby; it was physically brutal on him, Corrie says. He just wanted to prove he could do it.

In the mid-'90s, Corrie sold the farm and he and Helen moved into Winkler. Vern followed, buying his own house, where he dogged and watched TV, but seldom ate meals. Many evenings, he and his parents would have dinner together—Vern preferred cheeseburgers and Coke—and talk about his business. "Sometimes he was incommunicative if he had had a really rough day," Corrie says. "Very often the next day, he would phone up and apologize for being grumpy. It was unusual for such a young man."

On Wed. June 4, Vern went to work alone at a farm storage plant near Winkler. The next day at 9:30 a.m., he was found dead. According to Sylvia, Vern had been on his knees in front of a wild steer, a kind of an bullfight, when the buller fell on him and broke his neck. The provincial workplace safety department is still investigating his death. He was 38.

BY BARBARA RICHMOND

ON THE ROAD AND IN THE SHOWROOM, IT'S ALL ABOUT PERFORMANCE.



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Reno Mazda
Calgary, AB



STEVE SCARFF JR.
Cay Mazda
Bullhead, NS



MICHAEL LUNDY
Brentville Mazda
Bentley, NS



BAYE WOOD
Dave Wood Mazda
Newmarket, ON



AL SUTHER
St. Catharines Mazda
St. Catharines, ON



BERNARD BOUCHARD
Chrysler Mazda
Beaumont, QC



DIMITRI AGRIOTIS
Brazzard Mazda
Brazzard, QC



JEAN BERNARD TREMBLAY
L'Ami Auto
Chicoutimi, QC



GUY ST-LOUIS
Covaultville Mazda
Covaultville, QC



NORMAND AGRIOTIS
Mazda 2000
Bellevue St. Jacques, QC



JEAN MARCEL BLAIS
Grand Potier Mazda
Quebec, QC



YVES LOISELLE
Paradis Auto
Montreal, QC



DENIS LEClerc
Rita Mazda
Montreal, QC



PIERRE HUGONVILLE
Wilmont Mazda
Montreal, QC



SERGE BLAIS
Blais Mazda
Sorel-Tracy, QC



PIERRE LESSARD
Sorel Mazda
St-Jeorges de Beauport, QC



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